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B E R N A R D L A Z A R E

JOB'S DUNGHEAP

ESSAYS ON JEWISH NATIONALISM

AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION, WITH A

PORTRAIT OF BERNARD LAZARE BY

CHARLES PÉGUY

SCHOCKEN BOOKS / NEW YORK

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NÎMES, where Bernard Lazare was born in 1865, is one of the ancient French settlements in the Languedoc where Jewish communities can trace their history back to Roman antiquity. Bernard Lazare came from a type of assimilated Sephardic family that still preserved certain traditions but did not trouble to give its children any special Jewish training. At the age of 21 he went to Paris, traditionally the meeting place for gifted young Frenchmen from the southern provinces. A modest income from his father, a small dealer in ready-made clothes, enabled him to study religious history.

He soon became well known in the literary world. Lazare was invited to attend the famous Tuesdays of Stéphane Mallarmé and shortly thereafter joined the ranks of the Symbolists. After 1890 he regularly contributed literary and cultural criticism to the *Entretiens politiques et littéraires*, official organ of the Symbolists.

His political education began in a Paris that had recently witnessed Boulanger's attempt to overthrow the Republic, the Panama scandal with its revelation of the degeneration of parliamentary life, and the rapid growth of the Socialist party. Lazare joined a

circle of dissident socialist intellectuals who represented a curious mixture of symbolist tendencies in art and anarchist tendencies in politics.

Nothing in this—and, in fact, nothing in his early writings—would have justified one in predicting a destiny for Bernard Lazare essentially different from that of the group of intellectuals to whom he belonged at that moment. What made him different and what raised his writings above the mere expression of the spirit of his time and milieu was his early recognition of the importance of the Jewish question and his consistent courage in making this recognition the central fact of his life.

Anti-Semitic agitation first became significant in politics in France about 1884. With the Panama scandal, in which a number of Jews were compromised, anti-Semitism attained the status, for one decade, of a full-blown political movement. What was more important for Jewish intellectuals like Bernard Lazare was the fact that French anti-Semitism had been linked with various socialist tendencies, so that Lazare was confronted in his own circle not only with vague anti-Jewish feelings but with articulate anti-Semitic doctrines.

His first reaction to the Jewish question was a decision to take anti-Semitism seriously. In 1894 he published a two-volume history of anti-Semitism, *L'Antisémitisme, son histoire et ses causes*. He began

with the question: Why is it that the Jews have met with so universal a hostility at all times and in all countries since their dispersal? He found the answer in the exclusiveness of the Jews themselves, who wanted to survive at any price as "a nation among nations," although they constituted a peculiar kind of nation that "had outlived and survived its nationality." At this time Lazare still believed that the Jewish question, since it was a national question, would automatically solve itself in the general process of the denationalization of the nations: with the evolution of a universal humanity the Jews would cease to be Jewish in the same way that Frenchmen would cease to be French.

The Dreyfus Affair was for Bernard Lazare—as it was for Theodor Herzl—the turning point. Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French army, was arrested in 1894 and charged with espionage on behalf of the German army. In the same year he was convicted by a military court-martial, sentenced to life imprisonment, and interned on Devil's Island, off the coast of French Guiana. Dreyfus had consistently protested his innocence from the beginning. In the months that followed, certain developments within the French General Staff cast suspicion on the sentence in the eyes of a considerably larger circle of interested persons than the Dreyfus family, until it finally became apparent that the trial and con-

demnation had been prompted by political reasons—as a move against the French Republic, on the one hand, and toward the establishment of anti-Semitism as a political movement, on the other. Bernard Lazare, working as a legal counsel for the Dreyfus family, was the first to denounce the “judicial error” and to insist on its political implications. His pamphlet, *Une erreur judiciaire; la vérité sur l'affaire Dreyfus*, published in 1896, succeeded in convincing Clémenceau, Zola, some of the socialists, among them Jean Jaurès, and others not only of Dreyfus’ innocence but of the existence of a plot on the part of the Army against the Republic. Henceforth the Dreyfus Affair was a battle for justice and the Republic against the Army and the anti-Semitic reactionary parties. By concerted effort the *Dreyfusards* secured the annulment of the original sentence and a revision trial in 1899. The second trial ended with a ten-year sentence for Dreyfus, whom the military court again judged guilty, but “with extenuating circumstances.” Thereupon the President of the Republic pardoned Dreyfus. Dreyfus, upon the request of his family and his Jewish advisors (with the exception of Lazare), accepted the pardon. It was this pardon which split the ranks of the *Dreyfusards*. Jaurès and the Socialist party, together with the official representatives of French Jewry, wanted to stop the Affair at any price and welcomed the pardon,

whereas Clémenceau, Zola, Bernard Lazare, and a few intellectuals around Charles Péguy wanted an unambiguous reversal of the original sentence.

In 1906, three years after Lazare's death, when Clémenceau had become Premier, the Court of Appeals—the highest judicial body of France—exercised its power to review the decisions of all other judicial bodies and annulled the sentence passed at the end of the revision trial. It went one step further, however. Afraid of the outcome of a second revision trial before a military court, it acquitted Dreyfus of all the charges that had been preferred against him, despite the fact that the Court of Appeals has no authority in law to issue a decision of its own but can only order the revision of a particular trial.

In the course of the fight for the acquittal of Dreyfus, Lazare came to know the Jewish people and the Jews of France as well as the enemies of the Jewish people. The conclusion he drew from these experiences was that Zionism offers the only possible solution to the Jewish question. This Zionism, as may be seen in the essays that follow, retained a strong social-revolutionary character.

Bernard Lazare's activities within the Zionist movement were of a limited scope only. Until 1899, to be a *Dreyfusard* was not to be employed part time, particularly if one was almost the only Jew in this movement for the liberation of a Jew. His many ar-

ticles were printed in two Zionist magazines: *Zion*, a multilingual publication whose French section was under Lazare's editorship, and the *Echo Sioniste*. In 1899 he founded his own monthly, *Le Flambeau*, an "organ of Zionist and social Judaism," only a few numbers of which appeared.

The second major event in Lazare's political development occurred in 1899. A year before he had attended the Second Zionist Congress at Basle, where he had been warmly received by Max Nordau as one of the few Jews in France who had dared defend and fight publicly for another Jew. Lazare was elected to the Actions Committee. It was at this point that Lazare separated himself from the official Zionist movement. In an open letter to Herzl (published in *Le Flambeau*, 1899) he explained his resignation from the Zionist Actions Committee. He accused the Committee of being "a sort of autocratic government [that] seeks to direct the Jewish masses as though they were ignorant children." His apprehensions, based on the larger issues of general "tendencies, procedures, and actions," arose out of the discussion of a Jewish Colonial Bank as it had been planned by Herzl at the time and in which Bernard Lazare saw a "tool" for the "oppression and demoralization" of the Jewish people. "It is not what the prophets formerly dreamed of and the humble folk who wrote the Psalms."

Bernard Lazare had hoped that "if I cut myself off from you, I do not cut myself off from the Jewish people . . . I will continue to labor for its freedom, even though it be by means which are not yours." But in fact he was now completely isolated, since he had separated himself previously from all other Jewish organizations and institutions. The few friends who remained loyal to him and among whom he still exerted a certain influence were of the non-Jewish literary milieu of *Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine*, the only magazine that continued to print his articles. It was here that his long essay on the condition of the Jews in Rumania was published.

Bernard Lazare died in 1903 at the age of 38. French Zionism lost in him "the only French Jew of distinction which it had ever attracted" (Baruch Hagani, *Bernard Lazare*, Paris, 1919).

The essay that forms an introduction to this volume was taken from Charles Péguy's *Notre Jeunesse*, first published in 1910 in *Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine*.

Charles Péguy (1874-1914), the French writer and poet, belonged to that generation of French intellectuals for which the Dreyfus Affair constituted the central political experience of its life. Péguy joined the *Dreyfusards* as a socialist and fought together with Georges Sorel, Bernard Lazare, and Jean Jaurès for the rehabilitation of Dreyfus. Under the impact

of Bergson's philosophy and the profound disillusion caused by the tactics and ambiguities of the French Socialist party during the Affair, he became a bitter enemy of all official socialism and in 1900 founded his own magazine, *Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine*, until the outbreak of the First World War the principal literary organ for writers of Left Wing tendencies and without Marxist orthodoxy. Romain Rolland, Georges Sorel, Daniel Halévy, and Bernard Lazare appeared side by side in its pages, and even on occasion—reprinted from German socialist papers—Rosa Luxemburg. During these years Péguy developed a Catholic socialist philosophy which was violently critical of all existing social, political, and religious institutions and showed definite tendencies toward a mystical nationalism.

The central theme of *Notre Jeunesse* is the description of the political and intellectual controversies that raged around the Dreyfus Affair, controversies at whose center, according to Péguy, stood the figure of Bernard Lazare. The essay is also, in sort, a reply to an earlier attempt by Daniel Halévy (*Apologie pour notre Passé*) to pass critical judgment on the activities and beliefs of this generation.

All footnotes in the text are by the Editor.

HANNAH ARENDT

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A PORTRAIT OF BERNARD LAZARE

JOB'S DUNGHEAP

A PORTRAIT OF BERNARD LAZARE

BY CHARLES PÉGUY

THE DREYFUS CASE was a confirmation, a culmination of at least three mystical currents in history. First of all, it lay on the main path of Hebrew mysticism. Why deny it? To say the contrary, on the contrary, would be suspect.

Jewish politics exist. Why deny it? To say the contrary, on the contrary, would be suspect. It is idiotic, like all politics. Like all politics, it is interfering. Like all politics, it is sterile. It carries on the business of Israel the way republican politicians carry on the business of the Republic. Above all, like all politics, it concerns itself with stifling, devouring, suppressing its own mystical inwardness, the mystical current from which it itself sprang. And it succeeds hardly in accomplishing anything else.

Far, then, from our having to consider the Dreyfus case as a political deal, as an arrangement, as a result of Jewish politics, *on the contrary*, we must look upon it as a result, a labor, an explosion of Jewish mysticism. The politicians, the rabbis, the communities of Israel, through centuries and centuries of per-

secution and trial, had only too readily acquired the habit, the policy, the routine of sacrificing some few of their own members in order to have peace, peace within the political household, the peace of kings and the great ones of this earth, peace from those who owed them money, peace from people and princes, peace from anti-Semites. All they asked was to be given another chance. All they asked was to keep on going. All they asked was to sacrifice Dreyfus in order to ward off the storm. The great majority of Jews is like the great majority of (other) voters. It fears war. It fears trouble. It fears anxiety. It fears, it is afraid of the mere thought of being bothered more perhaps than of anything else. It would prefer silence and a base tranquillity. If only we could come to terms in return for an understanding silence, purchase peace by handing over a scapegoat, buy a tenuous tranquillity by means of some betrayal, some treachery, some baseness. Well does Israel know what it is to hand over innocent blood. In times of peace, it fears war. It fears blows. It fears scandals. It is forced into its own greatness. It is led to its great and sorrowful destiny only because it is dragged there by a handful of the fractious, a band of frantic men gathered around a few leaders who are precisely the prophets of Israel.

The prophet, in the great crisis of Israel and of the world, was Bernard Lazare. Because a man wears spectacles, because he wears eyeglasses athwart a

fold on his nose, in front of two big eyes, modern man believes him to be modern, modern man is incapable of seeing, does not see, does not know how to recognize the ancientness of the prophetic look.

I had once begun to write a "Portrait of Bernard Lazare." But one for men of fifty. Vast quantities of idiots, both in Israel and in Christendom, still believe that Bernard Lazare was a young writer come to Paris, like so many others, in order to push himself along, in order to make his fortune there by means of letters—as the expression still went in those days—by means of the theater, by means of tales, by means of novelettes, by means of books, by means of a short story, by means of anthologies, by means of a tale, by means of trash, by means of journalism, by means of politics, by means of all worldly misery; come to the Latin Quarter, like all the young folk from those regions, a young southern Jew, from Avignon and from Vaucluse, or from the mouths of the Rhone, or, better, from the Gard and the Hérault. A young Jew from Nîmes, or from Montpellier. I should not be surprised at it, indeed I am sure that young Bernard Lazare thought so himself. At first a prophet does not know himself. You still could find people to write a whole book on Bernard Lazare the Symbolist and young poet, or else the friend of the Symbolists, or the enemy of Symbolists. I do no longer know which. And with regard to the Dreyfus case itself, I should not be surprised if the headquar-

ters of the Dreyfus faction, Dreyfus' milieu, Dreyfus' family and Dreyfus himself had always viewed Bernard Lazare as an agent who was being paid, as a sort of juridical or judiciary counsel, but not limited to advice on juridical questions, as a charlatan writing minutes, working for a salary, as a publicist, as a maker of booklets, for hire, as a polemicist and a polemist, as a journalist without a newspaper, as an unofficial attorney, at an honorarium, as an officious fellow, as a non-pleading attorney.¹ As a charlatan, as a drawer-up of minutes and briefs, as a sort of consultant attorney in juridical matters and above all in political matters, in short, as a cheap pamphleteer. As a professional writer. Therefore, as a man you despise. As a man who labored, who wrote on a set theme. A theme which they set him, which they had set him. As a man who earned his living, who earned what he could, who earned what he earned. Therefore, as a man you despise, as one member of the retinue. Perhaps as an executive secretary. Israel passes the Just Man by and scorns him. Israel passes the Prophet by, follows him, and does not see him.

Israel's unawareness of the prophets and yet Is-

¹ The Dreyfus family had originally asked Bernard Lazare to draw up a memorandum to prove the innocence of Alfred Dreyfus. As soon as it became obvious that more was involved than a judicial error whose victim happened to be a Jew, the Dreyfus family shrank from the political implications of the case and sought to prevent Lazare, as it prevented the famous lawyer, Fernand Labori, from representing Dreyfus at the revision trial in 1899.

rael's guidance by the prophets—that is the whole history of Israel.

The sinners' unawareness of saints and yet the salvation of sinners by the saints—that is the whole history of Christianity.

Israel's unawareness of the prophets has no equal, nothing with which to compare it, except, although it remains very different, the sinners' unawareness of the saints.

You could even say that Israel's unawareness of the prophets is a *figure* of the sinners' unawareness of the saints.

When a prophet passes by, Israel believes that here is a publicist. Who knows, perhaps a sociologist.

If only we could get him a job at the Sorbonne. Or better, at the School (*practical?*) for Higher Studies. Fourth section. Or fifth. Or third. In short, the section for the scientific study of religion. At the Sorbonne, at the very end of the Science corridor, stairway E, on the second floor. Surely we should be able to do this. We have so much power in the French state.

One of the most fearful documents of human ingratitude (in this instance it was particularly of Jewish ingratitude, but also, speaking generally, it was the ingratitude of so many others, if not our own, a common ingratitude) was the treatment meted out to Bernard Lazare immediately after the getting-out-

of-gear and the seeming triumph, the false triumph of the Dreyfus case.² The total unawareness, the ignoring, the loneliness, the forgetfulness, the scorn into which he was let fall, into which he was caused to fall, in which he was caused to perish. In which he was caused to die.

"It's his fault also if he is dead," said they in their unbelievable, in their incurable lowness, in their revoltingly vulgar promiscuousness. One should never die. One is always wrong if one dies. Thus it must be said, thus it must be written, thus it must be published that as he had lived for them, literally he died because of them and for them. Yes, yes, I know, he died of this disease. Or of that. You always die of something. But the terrible malady of which he died would have spared him for a time, for ten, fifteen, twenty years of respite, had it not been for the frightful overwork with which he taxed himself to save Dreyfus, a terrible nervous tension, which lasted for years. Frightful overwork of the body and of the mind. Worst of all, overwork of the heart. Overwork of everything.

You always die of some seizure or other.

I shall paint the portrait of Bernard Lazare. He had, beyond denial, aspects of a saint, of sanctity. And when I speak of a saint, I am not to be suspected of using a metaphor. He had a gentleness, a goodness, a mystical tenderness, an evenness of temper, an ex-

² An allusion to the pardon of 1899.

perience of bitterness and ingratitude, a perfect capacity to stomach bitterness and ingratitude, a kind of goodness you could scarcely match, a kind of goodness perfectly informed and perfectly trained, of unbelievable depth. As though a goodness to be retailed to others. He lived and he died for them as a martyr. He was a prophet. Thus it was fitting that he be prematurely shrouded in silence and forgetfulness. In a manufactured silence. In a concerted forgetfulness.

His death must not be alleged against him. For his death itself was on their behalf. He must not be reproached for his death.

People above all held it against him, the Jews above all held it against him, above all were scornful of him, because he was not rich. I even think that people said he was a spendthrift. What this meant was that people no longer needed him, or that they thought that they no longer needed him. Perhaps indeed he did cost them a little; had cost them a little more. He was a man with an open hand.

Only perhaps one should have considered him beyond any price.

For he was dead before he was dead. Israel once again, Israel was pursuing its temporally eternal destiny. It is altogether remarkable that the only paper in which our friend was ever worthily treated, I mean in scale with his dignity, in scale with his greatness, in scale with his measure, in his order of greatness, in which he was of course treated as an enemy,

violently, bitterly, as an enemy, but still according to his measure, in which he was considered in the measure of his greatness, in which it was said, in hostile terms, but still in which it was said how much he loved Israel and how great he was, was the *Libre Parole*; and that the only man who said it was M. Edouard Drumont.³ It is to our shame that the name of Bernard Lazare, in the five or six years since his death, has appeared nowhere except in an enemy paper. I do not include our *Cahiers*,⁴ whereof he remains the inward friend, the secret inspirer—I should very readily and very precisely say, the chief. Apart from us—I say it very limitatively, as one would in the law—apart from us and the *Cahiers*, only M. Edouard Drumont has known how to talk about Bernard Lazare, has wanted to talk about him, has taken his measure.

All the rest, our own people, became silent even before his death, have since kept still with such care, shameful care, with such perfection, with such patience, with such an extraordinary success.

And he was dead before he was dead.

It was as though they were ashamed of him. But in reality it was they who were ashamed of themselves in his presence.

³ Famous anti-Semitic journalist, author of *La France Juive* (1886), whose newspaper, *La Libre Parole*, had played a major role in the aftermath of the Panama scandal and in the development of the Dreyfus Affair.

⁴ *Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine*.

It was the politicians, it was politics itself which was ashamed of itself in the presence of something mystical.

It can be said that his last pleasure, as long as he was able to walk, as long as he was able to keep going, lay in coming as it were to warm himself among us on the *Cahiers*-Thursdays. He greatly liked to chat with M. Sorel.⁵ I must add that their talk was generally marked by a great feeling of disillusionment.

He had a secret liking, very notable, very deep, and almost very violent, for M. Sorel. A common taste in disillusionment; people in common who no longer mattered. When they laughed together, when they both burst out laughing at the same instant, for both of them had a spontaneous laugh, it was with a depth of agreement, an unbelievable complicity. That striking agreement of mind, of laughter, which does not hesitate, which does not calculate, which at a stroke reaching to the deepest depths, to the ultimate limit, bursts forth and reveals. Which with a single word achieves the ultimate word. Everything M. Sorel said so struck him that he kept talking to me about it all the other mornings of the week. They were like two great conspirators. Two great con-

⁵ Georges Sorel (1847-1922), author of *Réflexions sur la Violence* (1908), belonged to the inner circle of the *Cahiers* and was one of the early *Dreyfusards*. His development was similar to that of Charles Péguy. He too started as a socialist, and he too became disillusioned by official socialism as represented by Jean Jaurès and the other leaders of the Socialist party.

spiring children who had known men very well.

Even then he was suspect. Even then he was isolated. The honor of having made the Dreyfus case cling to his shoulders like some pitiless mantle. Above all suspect, above all lonely in his own party. Not a single paper, not a magazine would accept or tolerate his signature. If absolutely necessary, they might have accepted a little something from him, but only on condition of dressing it up, of getting it out of shape, of sugaring it. Above all of stripping, of erasing from it that devil of a signature. It was natural that he turned toward us. There remained only the *Cahiers* in which he could talk, write, publish—even chat. Whenever negotiations started for the creation of some great daily (in those days there were everlasting negotiations for the creation of a great new daily) and whenever Jews were asked for money (they gave freely then, they let themselves in for altogether too much, as M. Jaurès knows) the Jewish capitalists and silent partners set only one condition on their contributions: and that condition was that Bernard Lazare should not write for the new paper.

On every hand there was a very thoroughgoing organization to see to it that he should quietly starve to death.

I still see him looking at me in his nearsighted way, so intelligent and at the same time so good, with

so intelligent, so enlightened, so enlightening, so luminous a gentleness, with so tireless, so informed, so enlightened, so disillusioned, so incurable a goodness. Because a man wears a pair of spectacles well-planted athwart a fat nose, glazing two good big myopic eyes, a modern observer is unable to recognize, he is unable to see the look, the fire lit there fifty centuries ago. But I, I drew near to him. I alone have dwelt in his intimacy and in his confidence. You had to listen to, you had to see this man, who naturally believed himself to be a modern. You had to examine that look, you had to listen to that voice. Naturally he was very sincerely an atheist. At that time, this was not merely the dominant metaphysic, it was the metaphysic in the air, in the air we breathed, a sort of climatic, atmospheric metaphysic; it was a matter of course, like having good manners; and moreover, it was positively, scientifically, triumphantly assumed that here was not, this was not a metaphysic; he was a positivist, a scientist, an intellectual, a modern—in short, everything that was proper; above all he would not listen to any talk about metaphysic(s). One of his favorite arguments, the one he was constantly serving up to me, was that Israel, being of all peoples the one which believed least in God, was obviously the one which it would be the easiest to rid of ancient superstitions; and thus it would be the one to show the road to the others. According to him the excellence

of the Jews lay in, sprang from this, that they had been, as it were beforehand, the freest thinkers. Even with a hyphen. And beneath this, within this, a heart which beat to all the echoes of the world, a man who pounced upon a paper and within its four pages, its six, eight, twelve pages, at a glance like lightning seized upon a line, and in that line there was the word Jew; a being who blushed and paled; an old journalist, an old hand at journalism, who blanched at an echo which he found in that paper, at a fragment of an article, at a single line, at a brief dispatch, and in that echo, in that paper, in that fragment of an article, in that single line, in that brief dispatch, there was the word Jew; a heart which bled in all the ghettos of the world, and perhaps even more in the broken ghettos, the scattered ghettos, like Paris, than in the closed ghettos, in the foreclosed ghettos; a heart which bled in Rumania and in Turkey, in Russia and in Algeria, in America and in Hungary, everywhere where the Jew is persecuted, which is, in a certain sense, everywhere; a heart which bled in the East and in the West, in Islam and in Christendom; a heart which bled even in Judea itself, and a man at the same time who made fun of the Zionists; such is the Jew; a quaking with anger, and it was for some wrong suffered in the valley of the Dnieper. And what our Powers did not wish to see, that he was the prophet, the Jew, the leader, that same thing the least Jewish peddler knew, saw, the

most miserable Jew in all Rumania. A quaking, a perpetual vibration. All you could possibly require in order to die at forty. Not a muscle, not a nerve which was not tensed for a secret mission, eternally vibrated for that mission. Never did a man behave in such degree as the leader of his race and of his people, responsible for his race and for his people. A being perpetually tensed. An ulterior tension, a pitiless underlying tension. Not a feeling, not a thought, not the shadow of a passion which was not tensed, which was not commanded by a commandment fifty centuries old, by the commandment fallen from above fifty centuries ago; a whole race, a whole world on his shoulders, a race, a world fifty centuries old upon the stooping shoulders; upon the rounded shoulders, upon the heavy shoulders; a heart devoured with fire, with the fire of his race, consumed with the fire of his people; fire in the heart, head aflame, *and the burning coal on the lips of the prophet.*

You must understand that here was a man, I have said with great exactness a prophet, for whom the whole apparatus of powers, reasons of state, temporal powers, political powers, authorities at every level, political, intellectual, even mental, did not weigh an ounce compared to a revolt, compared to a prompting of conscience. You cannot even have an idea of it. We, all the rest of us, cannot even have an idea of it. When we revolt against some authority,

when we march forth against the authorities, at least we stir them up. In the end we feel the weight of it. At least we have to stir them up. We know, we feel that we are marching against them and that we stir them up. For him, they did not even exist. Even less than I can tell you. I have not even the faintest idea how to express the degree in which he scorned the authorities—the temporal authorities—how he scorned the authorities, how to give you an idea of it. He did not even scorn them. He ignored them, and more. He did not see them, he did not consider them. He was nearsighted. For him they did not exist. They were not on his level, of his order of greatness, of his greatness. They were totally foreign to him. They were for him less than nothing, equal to zero. They were like ladies he would not receive in his house. For authority, for those in command, for the government, for force, temporal force, for the state, for the reason of state, for gentlemen vested with authority, vested with reasons of state, he had such a hatred, such an aversion, such a constant revulsion that the hatred wiped them out, that they did not enter, did not have the honor of entering into his comprehension.

Bear in mind that these were the days when every partisan of Dreyfus who was playing politics was the best friend of the Court of Appeals, would say “the Court of Appeals” with a puffing out of the cheeks, would burst with pride at having been juridically

approved, justified by the Court of Appeals, would roll his eyes, would reassure himself in the bottom of his heart on the basis of the Court of Appeals that Dreyfus was indeed innocent. Bernard Lazare had remained *gamin*, with an unconquerable *gaminerie* with that *gaminerie* which is the very mark of greatness, with that noble *gaminerie*, that easy *gaminerie* which is the mark of ease in greatness. And above all with that male *gaminerie* which is strictly the property of pure hearts. No, never have I seen such ease, such sovereign ease. Never have I seen a spiritual being so sovereignly, so healthily, so easily, so equanimously scorn temporal company. Never have I seen a spiritual being thus cancel out a temporal body. You understood very well that for him the Court of Appeals was not in the least overawing, that for him here were a lot of old men, of old fellows, that the idea of setting them up against him, Bernard Lazare, as a judicial authority was simply baroque, burlesque, that he, Bernard Lazare, was an altogether different authority, judicial, political and everything else. That he had an altogether different province, an altogether different jurisdiction, that he expressed an altogether different law. That he saw them perfectly, and constantly, stripped of their magistracy, divested of all their badges of office and of those very robes which make it impossible to see the man. That he could not see them in any other fashion. Even if he put his good will into it, all his

good will. Because he was good. Even if he strained himself. That he did not even conceive that anyone could have seen them otherwise. That he himself could see them only as old naked monkeys. In no sense, as you might at first believe, as a first glance, a superficial, hasty glance might at first allow you to suppose, as old monkeys clad in justices' robes and ermine. You understood very well that he knew that he, Bernard Lazare, had set those fellows going, that others would set them going again, and that he, Bernard Lazare, would never be set going, that above all those fellows would never set him going. That he had temporally set everyone going, and that no one would ever set him spiritually going. For him they were not, never would be the highest authority in the kingdom, the highest judiciary authority, the highest jurisdiction of the kingdom, the highest magistracy of the Republic. They were old judges. And he well knew what an old judge is. You understood very well that he knew that he had set those fellows going, and that they would never set him going.

He would say to me: Dreyfus will go before fifty courts-martial, if necessary; or else: Dreyfus will go before courts-martial all his life. But he must be acquitted just like anyone else. His deepest thought, moreover, was that Dreyfus was very foolish to trouble himself so much in order to have his innocence attested by the constituted authorities; that those

people had nothing to do with the case; that since he had been torn away from an iniquitous persecution, the main thing had been done, everything had been done; that any veneering by authority, any judicial sanctions were wholly superfluous, did not exist since they came from negligible bodies; that all this was to pay excessive honor to these gentlemen; that you are very nice when you are innocent to go to the trouble of having it attested. That thus one supplies these authorities with an authority of which they are greatly in need. But then, on second thought, if you were to have recourse there, it must be done with rectitude, it must not be done shiftily, you must not cheat, *especially, of course, because you thus took on the appearance, and perhaps even the reality, of bowing before them, of fearing them.* Since you were turning to them, since you were making use of them, they must be made use of, they must be turned to with rectitude. This was one more possibility to command them. If this were politics, at least it had to be straight. He had an incredible liking for straightforwardness, especially in anything he did not like, in politics and the judiciary. He made it up to himself, as it were, by thus turning to them in spite of himself while being straightforward toward them in spite of themselves. I never saw anyone who so well knew how to keep his distance, to be distant, so gently, so intelligently, so horizontally as it were. I have never seen a spiritual power, someone who

feels himself, who knows himself a spiritual power, so inwardly keep, as it were, horizontal distances so scornfully toward the temporal powers. And thus he had a secret affection, a friendship, a deep affinity for *other* spiritual powers, even for the Catholics, whom he deliberately opposed. But he sought to oppose them only with spiritual weapons in spiritual battles. Through a sort of political equilibrium, balance, equity, equality, justice, health, a sort of equitable assessment, he did not want others dealt with as those same others would have dealt with you, but as one would not want them to deal with you. "The clericals have bothered us for years," he would say, or even more emphatically, "It cannot now be a question of bothering Catholics." Never has a Jew been seen so little partisan, so little thinking, so little conceiving of retaliation. He did not exactly wish to render good for evil, but certainly justice for injustice.

How fail to record his precise, his perfect, his real internationalism—Israel excepted—the precision, the ease, the matter of course of his internationalism, which was far too simple, far too natural, in no wise acquired, in no wise forced, in no wise bookish, much at ease, much too matter of course ever to become an anti-nationalism. When he talked to Bretons about the Poles, it was not a joke, a witty *rapprochement*. It was not a whimsy and for the sake of playing a trick. It was that he naturally saw the

Bretons and the Poles on the same level. He actually viewed Christianity as he viewed Islam, something that no one of us, even those who would most like to, can achieve. Because he was in all reality equally outside both. A view, a point of reference which no one of us can achieve.

I shall tell what his burial was like. Who we were, how few in that train, in that funeral procession, in that loyal gray company going down into and passing through Paris. In the middle of vacation-time. In that month of August, or rather in that beginning of the month of September. A handful of people, the same madmen, the same fanatics, Jews and Christians, a few rich Jews, very few, a few rich Christians, very few, poor and destitute Jews and Christians, and even they in small enough number. In short, a tiny flock, a very tiny flock. Like some company at half strength crossing Paris. Some wretchedly poor foreign Jews, foreign I mean to French citizenship, for there was not a Rumanian Jew, I mean a Jew from Rumania, who did not know him for a prophet, who did not hold him to be a true prophet. For all those wretched, for all those persecuted folk, he was still a flash of lightning, a rekindling of the torch which through all eternity will never be quenched. Temporally through all eternity.

I shall tell of his death, his long and cruel illness, and all the slow and so prompt progress of his death.

That kind of savage illness. As though ruthless. As though itself fanatic. As though itself frantic. Like him. Like us. I know of nothing so poignant, so striking, I am aware of nothing so tragic as this man who, stiffening every last resource of his strength, put himself at odds with his victorious party. Who in a desperate effort, wherein he tore himself to pieces, sought, undertook to swim upstream against that current, that wave, that terrible current, that irresistible current of victory and abuses, of the abuse of victory. The sole current you can never swim upstream against. The irresistible current of victory won. Of victory accomplished. Of the sweep of victory. The irresistible, the mechanical, the automatic current of the very play of victory.

I can still see him lying in his bed. That atheist, that professional atheist, that official atheist in whom resounded, with an incredible strength and gentleness, the eternal word; with an eternal strength; with an eternal gentleness; such as I have never found equaled in any other man. I still have upon me, in my eyes, the eternal goodness of that infinitely gentle look, that goodness not flung forth, but poised, informed. Itself infinitely disillusioned; infinitely informed; infinitely irresistible. I see him still lying in his bed, that atheist streaming with the word of God. At the very point of death, all the burden of his people weighed on his shoulders. There was no use telling him that it was not his responsibility. I have

never seen a man so charged, so burdened with a charge, with an eternal responsibility. As we are, as we feel ourselves charged with our children, with our own children in our own family, so much, exactly so much, exactly thus did he feel himself charged with his people. In the most dreadful suffering he had only one concern: that *his* Jews in Rumania might not be *craftily* overlooked in that agitation which certain European publicists were then carrying on against the excesses of Eastern European persecution. I see him lying in his bed.

He talked about all things as though he were going to live for a hundred years. He told me with much pride, childlike pride, that the Amsterdam subway station had been opened. Or some other one. He was artlessly enthusiastic over everything having to do with ways and means of communication. Everything which was going and coming, geographical, topographical, telegraphic, telephonic, back and forth, movings about, displacements, replacements, voyages, exoduses and deuteronomies brought him an accumulation of inexhaustible, childlike joy. The subway especially was his own personal triumph. Everything which was speed, acceleration, feverish communication, displacement, quick movement, filled him with childlike joy, with the ancient joy, with a joy of fifty centuries. It was his business, his own. *To be elsewhere*, the great vice of that race, the great secret virtue; the great vocation of that people. No

sooner was he put on a railroad train than, through a remembrance of fifty centuries, it became some caravan of fifty centuries ago. For them, every crossing is the crossing of the desert. The most comfortable houses, the best established, built of cut stone as massive as the columns of the Temple, the most immovable buildings, the most permanent buildings, the most crushing of permanent buildings, are never for them anything but a tent in the desert.

A people for whom the stones of dwellings will ever be the canvas of tents. While for us, on the contrary, the canvas of tents already was, will always be, the stones of our dwellings. Thus not only had he not felt for the subway that aversion, that shyness which at heart we always retain toward it—even when it is most useful to us—*because it transports us too quickly* and essentially because it is too useful to us, but, quite on the contrary, he had it for his own special, altogether proud affection, like some pride of authorship. It was being dug at the time, Line Number 1 alone, as I recall, being in service. He had a local pride, a neighborhood pride, that the subway should already have stretched as far as him, among the very first, that it should have been pushed to him, that it should have begun to climb up toward the heights on which he lived. He had told me as much a few months earlier, when friends had tried to send him, like anyone else, toward the revivifying South. He had wandered from hotel to hotel. He was

happy as a child. Until he found some sort of little peasant's house; which he described to me in a letter as paradise achieved. And whence quite naturally he quickly returned, came back to Paris. He had then explained it to me, in one of those phrases which illumine a man, a people, a race. "You see, Péguy," he said to me, "I only begin to feel at home when I arrive at a hotel."

To sum up, in his action, in his politics, since there must be one, since one had to descend to one, he was a partisan of the impartiality of the law. Impartiality of law in the Dreyfus case, impartial law in the case of the religious orders. This seems like a trifle; this can lead far. This led him to isolation in death.

Essentially he favored justice, equity, equality (not, naturally, in the democratic sense, but in the sense of perfect equilibrium, of perfect horizontality in justice). He was against the exception, against exceptional law, against the exceptional measure, be it for or against, persecution or reprieve. He was for *levelness* in justice.

He was a fellow who had the very habits of freedom. He had freedom in his skin, in his marrow and in his blood; in his spine. And not at all an intellectual and conceptual freedom, a bookish freedom, a ready-made freedom, a library freedom either. A trade-marked freedom. But a freedom, rather, of the wellspring, a wholly organic and living freedom. Never have I seen a man believe to such a degree, to

such a degree be certain, to such a degree be aware that a man's conscience is something absolute, invincible, eternal, something free, that victorious and everlastingly triumphant stands firm against all the greatness of the earth.

JOB'S DUNGHEAP¹

LOOK AT JOB UPON HIS DUNGHEAP, scraping his boils, delighting in his sores. Look, Christians, and you Princes of the Jews, at the people and what you have done to it.

The demoralization of a people of the poor and the persecuted, receiving a dole from its rich and having rebelled only against persecution from without and not against oppression within. Revolutionaries in the society of others and not in its own. Having a dumb admiration for its own wealthy men, whose honors are reflected upon the poor. Even today in Jewish papers notice is given of those privileged ones who achieve honors.

The Jews must free themselves in their quality as a people and within their own nation.

The Jew is still at that stage of inferiority which allows him to rejoice in the opulence of his leaders.

¹ Under this title Bernard Lazare, shortly before his early death, was preparing a comprehensive work on the Jewish people. Fragments and aphorisms, notes jotted down, were all that was left when he died. The following aphorisms have been selected from *Le Fumier de Job*, edited by Edmond Fleg and published by Les Editions Rieder (Paris, 1928).

The Jew felt external oppression most heavily, and this oppression had leveled social conditions among his people. Once external oppression ceased, he preserved the same respect for the wealthy class, even though fraternity had disappeared.

The Jews of today.

Servility toward the rich, and at the same time disrespect. Yet among the Jews there does not exist an ancient financial aristocracy; the rich Jews in modern society are not the offspring of wealthy dynasties. The oldest go back a hundred years. Old bourgeois and rich families among the Jews—such do not exist. At the beginning of this century there remained in the spirit of the people scorn for the gold it had handled, and at the same time a lavishness and a generosity created by that contempt. To-day's rich Jew clings to gold and venerates it like the Christian who has always worshiped it (the conquest of America, the gold-seekers). The Jew lost it the moment he got it, and despised it.

In no people so much as in the Jewish people is there to be found so much servility toward the rich; and yet no people has so castigated them by means of the voices of its prophets or the poets of the Psalms. Centuries of oppression have changed that;

spirit and soul have become debased. The stiff-necked tribe has become a tribe of slaves that suffers in silence the misdeeds of the powerful by whom it has through so many long years allowed itself to be led. Nevertheless, an awakening seems to be taking place among the lower middle class, the proletariat, the men without work, the beggars. They understand the disadvantages that can exist in being solidary with people who themselves repel that solidarity. Up until now they had the shadow of a reason for not fighting them: they believed them to be Jews, but now that they have become anti-Semites, what are the Jews waiting for to kick them aside, and even to act directly against them? ²

The rottenness of the Jewish upper classes.

They are not in their own sphere; they exceed all bounds, and their rottenness becomes more stinking. They do not know how far you can go; they do not preserve the balance of their Christian opposite numbers.

The notion which the Christians have of the Jew is a mystical and not a human notion.

The Jews look upon themselves always in relation to the Christians, never as themselves.

² From "Chantage Politique" in *L'Echo Sioniste* (May 1901).

Throughout this whole century the Jews have bestirred themselves to prove to the heads of states the advantage which those politicians and their people would gain in emancipating the Jews. As for the advantage to the Jews of being emancipated—that they have not proved.

From his long enslavement the Jew has retained an extreme distrustfulness. And yet his ever precarious state leads him to show enthusiasm for all those who tell him that they will lead him into the Promised Land.

Let us ceaselessly lay claim on behalf of our unhappy brothers to the rights of man, but let us at the same time show them that assimilation is not the end of their wretchedness, but, on the contrary, the source of new miseries.

I AM A JEW and I know nothing about the Jews. Henceforth I am a pariah, and I know not out of what elements to rebuild myself a dignity and a personality. I must learn who I am and why I am hated, and that which I can be.



I shall have the courage to point out the ulcers of my people and to cure them.

I have overcome the pride of being a Jew, I know why I am one, and that binds me to the past of my own people, links me to their present, obliges me to serve them, allows me to cry out for all their rights as men.

The danger which threatens a people in slavery for centuries: the danger of being exclusive.

What could the Jew have done to hold out had he not taken refuge in his pride of race.

Every Jew has his system, his idea of the world, his economic and social theory, his means of solving the problem of Jewish wretchedness, of anti-Semitism. He is a great builder of doctrines, an outrageous idealist (Marx, Lassalle).

The Jewish worker cannot do his material task without thinking, without shaping himself an idea of the world and of society; he reasons falsely, often observes badly; but he systematizes; he is a logician and goes to the very end once he has started.

The Jewish water-carrier has his sociology and his metaphysics.

This people drives you insane or makes you mad with rage. You lose your balance when you study it, for circumstances have brought it about that you can have studied it only theoretically, religiously, mystically.

“Thou hast given us like sheep to be eaten; and hast scattered us among the nations,” says the Psalmist.

Thou hast sold thy people for nought, and hast not increased thy wealth by their price. Thou hast made us a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us. Every day my shame is before my eyes and blushes cover my brow when I hear the voice of the contemner and the railers, when I see the enemy, he who wants to revenge himself upon me. It is for thee that we are daily killed, treated like a herd led to the shambles; we are bedded in dust and our body is stuck fast to the ground.

When the winters are harsh, when torrential rains fall, when the aurora borealis ensanguines the sky, when comets lighten it, when earthquakes stagger the cities, when in some fashion the world is shaken, the frightened old women open wide their eyes and whisper, “The time is come, Messiah will come.” Blessed are they for having faith and for finding in their terror the supreme consolation; and how greatly would I wish, when the night of my soul becomes darker and darker, when the dreadful anguish of the beyond twists it and tortures it, to be illumined with a sudden enlightenment; and, trembling at once with joy and with terror, also whisper, “Messiah will come.”

When one is "the servant of God," the slave of the Lord, one is not the slave of men, and when some day one no longer believes in God, what does there remain within the liberated man?

THE BIBLE (Genesis) resolves the problem of evil in the Fall and Original Sin. This explanation does not satisfy Job, because he more straitly links the problem of evil to that of Justice; he does not make it into a metaphysical but into a moral problem.

For Job there exists neither punishment nor reward. The world is full of incidents, of fortuitous circumstances. The fate of the wise man and that of the fool are equal.

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die," says Ezekiel. The son shall not die for the sin of his father.

What moral progress! Punishment is individual. How far we are from the crime for which seven generations can bear the penalty. What boldness there is in the prophet's theory, mindful as he must be of the precepts called Mosaic, and how retrograde is Christianity with its original sin, eternal expiation, and the substitution of the innocent for the guilty.

The Jew has not the idea of sin; he has the idea of sins, of infractions of the divine law, but not of sin engendering moral evil.

The story of Adam and Eve has only the purpose of explaining physical evil. Man, according to the Old Testament, is free and can choose between good (perfect innocence and stupid beatitude) and evil (knowledge and grievous intellectuality). It is the tendency toward evil which is explained, not the absolute cause of sin. Man's nature is not changed after sin; he is afterwards as he was before, free to choose good and evil.

For Christianity the innate tendency toward evil makes man worthy of damnation; the natural state of man is a state of guiltiness. Here is not the Jewish thought of the Bible; on the contrary, to the Jewish mind the natural bad tendency is an extenuating circumstance which the sinner can successfully plead before God.

The world is the best possible world. God, says the talmudic legend, had created many worlds before this one, and they did not please him. One after another he destroyed them, but in this one he took pleasure.

But in this best possible world, man's life is not always the best possible (Ecclesiastes).

Make my life long, says the poor man, do not cut it off short.

The idea that he must die saddens him, whereas it rejoices the Christian. When man will have become

superior, the idea of death will be indifferent to him, and he will be able to enjoy life. That the Christian will never accomplish.

JEWISH CEMETERIES. Oh, ancient, harassed cemetery, raising thy proud ruins beneath a stormy sky! Cemetery whose great trees are twisted by the winds, but which the rainbow illumines with a hope. Tableau of the life of Israel, thou whose forsaken tombs lie sleeping by the edge of the torrent. Cemetery of solitude which one soul barely enlivens, meditating on those who have suffered through life in the hope of liberation, and whom death alone has freed. Cemetery harassed like the genius of Israel, thou whom the painter has painted dark as the souls of the living, with the ray of hope which the expectation of the unknown has placed in dying pupils. Torrent which flows foaming through the rocks near the tree trunk shattered by lightning as Judah has been shattered. What thinks that shade which meditates, hard by the tombstone, O Ruysdael?

If the old cemetery of Prague is sad, that of Worms seems joyful. It is not hemmed in between the walls of a synagogue. The stones stand up in a great open meadow; with their feet in the thick grass, they stand up, and as you read the old inscriptions and look at the ancient and ever new symbols,

you walk upon the dead. Your feet sink into the earth in which is mixed their dust. Those of Prague, one feels, went to sleep in despair: flesh bleeding under blows, faces soiled with mud, eyes burnt by the flames of pyres, and it would appear, if one dwells for a moment among them, if one listens to their voices, that they doubted when they closed their eyelids whether they would find final rest while they awaited the resurrection. Those of Worms must have fallen asleep with joy, happy to flee and to conquer the sleep without dread, the sleep their life would not have known. They invite those who are able to hear them to come toward them tranquilly, when their own lives are completed. For the Jews of Worms must have loved life, and the despair of those of Prague perhaps lay in their not having been able to love it.

Here, in the cemeteries of Constantinople, I understand the Jew better. Over yonder, in order to see him, we take too little account of the East. These cemeteries of Eyoub³ and those of Prague and Worms resemble each other.

The Jews, perhaps, in former years, under more fiery skies, in Spain, visited them, and I understand those of Toledo, before quitting the blessed earth, going there and weeping for two days.

³ A suburb of Constantinople, as is Kass-Keui, mentioned below.

From the height of the cemetery of Eyoub, over there on the hillock, you can see the crowded graves of the Jewish cemetery of Kass-Keui. They seem illumined by the setting sun, a pale sun of May, which allows beings and things to float on the horizon, a sun which softens the Golden Horn ⁴ and caresses the minarets and the cupolas.

The old cemetery of Lemberg.

Always the same desolate look; the cemetery not leveled off, the graves climbing up little mounds, descending the miniature vales, overrun with bushes and planted with trees, the foliage less thick than that at Prague. The tombstones are laden with ornament and violently colored in blue, in yellow, or in red, as in Moslem cemeteries. The grave of Rose, the Gilded Rose, and that of her husband, a vast tombstone highly decorated, is painted (at Cracow also a few painted letters, but not so ornate). She was so beautiful that the lords of the earth fell at her feet. Another grave, that of a teacher, a reform rabbi whom the fanatical Hasidim had imprisoned in 1848. Then the graves of the Hasidim, of famous rabbis, with a niche of iron hanging from the stone itself, a niche in which on the anniversary day candles were placed and lit. Then wires bound about the washed stones, and bits of paper affixed to them. These were placed there in honor of the dead man when men

⁴ Port of Constantinople.

came to pay him a visit. In a corner, cut off, separate, the graves of the Karaites.

The old cemetery of Cracow, with the grave of Isserlés (known as Rema, d. 1572) and of his kinsmen. The straight stones gathered together in an enclosure surrounded with iron grillwork. This cemetery, hemmed in by leprous houses, has not the sad poetry of that at Prague. It seems more slighted; not a tree; whereas at Prague foliage shades the ancient stones. The old caretaker recounts the legends; they all begin in this fashion: In those days there was a persecution of the Jews. . . . What an indeterminate time indeed! That time is all times.

At Cracow, in the cemetery, legend has it, is the grave of one of the thirty-six righteous men. It is said that there are always thirty-six of these righteous men in the world; if they were not there, the world would not live. These thirty-six righteous men uphold the world, and these thirty-six righteous men must be workingmen (a rich man cannot be a righteous man), tailors, it is said nowadays. But no one knows who these righteous men are. How then do we know him who is buried, we are told, in the Cracow cemetery? In this fashion. Long ago, four hundred years ago, there was a cruel persecution of the Jews. The rabbi of the Cracow community grieved over it. Elijah the prophet appeared to him one night and said to him: "One man alone can save

you; he is one of the thirty-six zaddikim," and he revealed to the rabbi the name and the dwelling place of that man. He lived in Spain. The rabbi started on his voyage and, by heavenly favor, was able to make it in a day. He found his man, announced to him that thanks to Elijah he knew him to be one of the thirty-six. Within a day he brought him to Cracow. The persecution ceased and the sage died in Cracow.

JEWISH NATIONALISM¹

WE ARE GATHERED HERE, individuals come from the most various countries: from Russia and Poland, from Rumania and Austria, from France, and of course from other lands as well. Yet we do not constitute a heterogeneous assemblage; there exists around us an atmosphere in the midst of which, whatever may be the country of our origin, we move to and fro with equal ease. From whatever town, near or far, we may come, whatever may be the social conditions to which we have been or are subject, we feel ourselves brothers because we are Jews. It is not enough, however, to state this fact; we must understand its meaning.

In asserting that I am a Jew by the same title as some other man, a resident of Odessa or of Prague,

¹ A lecture given before the Association of Russian Jewish Students, March 6, 1897, published in the pamphlets of the *Publications du Kadimah* (1898), No. 1. It is given here in its entirety, except for a few sentences that had only a contemporary interest.

Around 1890, a small Zionist movement came into being in France. Its adherents were almost exclusively students who had come from Russia, Rumania, and Galicia and had there been influenced by the pre-Herzl Zionists, particularly by Leo Pinsker and his pamphlet *Auto-Emancipation* (1881). This small Zionist nucleus did not survive the end of the Dreyfus Affair and of the sudden outburst of violent political anti-Semitism which had accompanied it.

of Bucharest, of Posen or of Warsaw, do I mean thereby to say that I have the same faith, the same dogmatic or metaphysical beliefs as this man whom I feel to be my neighbor? In a word, is it a religious bond which unites us? In calling ourselves Jews, do we mean to say that we have an identical conception of God, and not only of God, but also of the worship owed him and even of the need for such a worship? In no sense: and there are among us some practicing Israelites—orthodox or liberal—some deists of course, some pantheists after the fashion of Philo or that of Spinoza, perhaps some positivists and materialists, and certainly some atheists. To be Jewish, then, does not mean to be of the same religion. I know that the opposite is commonly asserted and one pretends to consider all those who do not attend the synagogues as not belonging to Israel. Especially in those countries where the Jews can take solace for the contempt shown them in the very fact that their emancipation has been sanctioned, it is common that one wants to find in Judaism no more than a religious confession. This may be tactics, this may be a policy—that of the ostrich—but it is not the truth! In this particular case, the anti-Semites are right. True enough, they do not know why, and it is merely their hatred which has given them a confused perspicacity, but they have truth on their side as against the periodicals which stand up for orthodoxy. Judaism includes a religion—a national religion—but it is

not a religion alone, and what answer can be given by an orthodox Jew, a Hasid, a student of the Talmud, or by one of those who repudiate the "Jew" and admit only the "Israelite," to the atheist who tells him: "I feel myself a Jew." Here is a feeling which has its worth; at least it exists and it is well to ask whence it springs, on what it rests, what are its causes and its origin.

To these questions an identical answer is given by the philo-Semites and the anti-Semites: What unites among themselves all the world's Jews is that they are of the same race. This assertion does not bear examination. The Russian Jew with his flat nose, his prominent cheekbones, his sunken eyes, the Spanish Jew with his curved nose, his fleshy mouth, the small, brown-haired Jew with his straight nose, the small, red-haired German Jew—have they all the same ancestor, are they descended from a single couple? No, although you might seek out ancestors for them in the Judea of another day, and you may discover their likenesses both on the bas-reliefs of the Hittites and on the frescos which adorn the tombs of the Pharaohs. There are several Jewish types, but despite crossbreeding and mixtures, it can be maintained, against Renan, that the perenniality of these types is beyond dispute. Hence if we correct the idea of the Jewish race as philo- and anti-Semites have conceived it, we may say that an identity of origin after all does constitute a link among the Jews.

But the belief in this common origin is not enough to unite us. Is it solely the traits attributed to us which bind us to one another? No, because it is on account of our being bound together that these traits are attributed to us.

Whence, then, do we draw this feeling of our unity? First of all in a common past, and a very recent past. The emancipated Jew most often behaves like an upstart; he forgets the miserable ancestor from whom he is sprung. Whereas most people go out of the way to find themselves ancestors, he wants to forget that he ever had one. That ancestor does him little honor; generally he was a poor devil whom people treated about as well as they would a dog, whose right to life was barely acknowledged, and who meekly, sordidly submitted, with the resignation of an unlovely humility. Yet if this emancipated Jew were carefully to examine his conscience, he would realize that the humility of his ancestor in him has become meanness, his resignation cowardice, and the excuse which could be alleged for the little Jew of yore today no longer holds. Among those I am describing, among the Jews of the West, there are also those who have sought to forget this past now only a century old, in order to be able to assimilate themselves to the nations in the midst of which they dwell. Have they succeeded in erasing from their minds and their hearts what seventeen hundred years have imprinted thereon? What is a

mere hundred years? Is it sufficient to wipe away the labors of several thousand years? For when I speak of seventeen centuries, I disregard the thousands of years during which the Jewish people shaped itself—that Jewish people which the wrath of Rome and the hatred of Christendom have scattered over the whole world, like some refractory seed. As though, during that mere century, dislike and contempt had disappeared. . . .

And if, despite everything, they want to forget, have they not a living witness to that olden time when they look upon the present condition of the Rumanian and Russian Jews, of the Jews of Persia and of Morocco? I recall a day when all that tragic past reappeared before my own eyes. It was in Amsterdam. I had wandered through the streets of the ghetto, pursuing the shadow of Spinoza, and I had gone to sit down in the old Portuguese synagogue the better to evoke the image of him whom the synagogue persecuted. I sat for a long time on the bench before the sanctuary, the wood of which, according to legend, came from Palestine, facing the marble plaque on which are inscribed the names of the Espinoza. When I went out, I beheld in the court of the synagogue an encampment of Russian Jews, and I thought myself carried back to the ages of yesteryear, when troops of fugitive Jews took to the roads to escape pillage, martyrdom, and the stake. All the centuries of wretchedness, of despair, of resignation,

and of heroic stubbornness came back to life, and there was the legendary Ahasuerus, the everlasting and destitute wanderer, whom I thought I saw passing before me. Certainly not the anti-Semitism of our day will blot that from our memories. And here is another living link between us: a common history.

This history involves common traditions and customs, not all of which have equally survived, for many of them were religious traditions and customs; but which nevertheless have left their mark upon us, have given us habits, and even more, a like attitude of mind thanks to which, despite the necessary individual differences which separate us and should separate us, we look upon things from the same angle. In addition to these traditions and customs, there have been worked out through the ages a literature and a philosophy. Upon this philosophy and this literature we have been wholly fed throughout long years. Needless to say, we today live, and many Jews of old lived, upon a capital of general ideas, of universal and human ideas, to the creation of which, indeed, our own people contributed, but we possess certain categories of ideas, certain possibilities of feeling and emotion, which belong only to us precisely because they spring from that history, from those traditions and those customs, from that literature and that philosophy.

Whenever a certain number of individuals have a common past, common traditions and ideas, we

say that they belong to the same group, that they have the same nationality. And this is what makes understandable that indubitable Jewish brotherhood, which so many seek to explain by means of humanitarian feeling—a bad explanation, since such feelings single themselves out and since those who seek to repudiate their Jewishness forget them. Here, then, is the justification of the link which unites the Jews of the five continents of the globe: There is a Jewish nation.

This is not the first time I have expressed this view. I developed it three years ago in a book which earned me many reproaches.² People told me that by affirming the permanence and the reality of a Jewish nation, I made myself an ally of the anti-Semites. I have reflected a great deal upon this grave complaint, and I insist upon remaining, on this point, in alliance with the anti-Semites, as people were kind enough to put it; I am their enemy in so many other matters that I may surely be permitted in this to bolster their confused assertions with accurate reasoning. What indeed annoys me on the part of the anti-Semites is not to hear them say, "You are a nation!" or even to hear them announce that we are a state within the State; I find that there are not enough states within the State; that is to say, to

² *L'Antisémitisme, son histoire et ses causes* (Paris 1894). Published in English as *Antisemitism, its History and Causes* (New York 1903).

make myself clearer, that there are not, within modern states, enough free and autonomous groups bound to each other. The human ideal does not seem to me political or intellectual unification. Only one unification seems to me necessary: moral unification. What shocks me, because it is contrary to the truth, is to hold the Jews up as a specially hateful, corrupting, and perverse nation. What shocks me, because it is contrary to justice, is, with a most shady purpose, to make the Jews responsible for all social evils.

Even if the fact of a Jewish nation were solely asserted by the anti-Semites and thrust aside by those Jews who like to fancy that they had fought alongside Arminius in the Teutoburger Wald, or beside Vercingetorix at Alesia, there would be no reason for me to deny something which is evident. If I look about me, I see—I repeat—some millions of human beings who have for centuries been subject to the same inner and outer laws, have lived under the same codes, have had the same ideas, the same customs; I ascertain that these many thousands of individuals still give themselves the same name, that they still feel themselves united, and that they are aware of belonging to the same group. What can I possibly conclude? That this multitude of individuals constitutes a nation. I shall be told that many among them have merged, assimilated themselves. Of what significance is that? Are there not, for in-

stance, Germans of French origin and Frenchmen of German origin? Does this prevent there being a German nation and a French nation? Certainly not, any more than it prevents critics from establishing what a certain German author owes to his French predecessors, or a certain French author to his German predecessors. The truth is that among those Jews who deny the existence of a Jewish nation, many are moved by fear of the consequences. Among them (with rare exceptions) this is not an opinion or a conviction but a diplomacy, and among these very persons—strangely enough—you will find the chauvinistic Jew, the Jew who says: "Here is something one never sees among the Jews." Or, "There is something to be found only among Jews." In reality you will find among the Jews the same sum total of virtues and the same sum total of vices and infamies as among all other peoples. Is this not natural?

It is because the Jews are a nation that anti-Semitism exists. Granted—and this cannot be too much emphasized—that religious prejudice lies at the root of the hatred of Israel, yet this religious prejudice at the same time implies the existence of the Jewish people upon which for nineteen hundred years have fallen the anathemas of the Church. Assume that Christianity had never existed and yet that the Diaspora had come into existence, the Jews, a nation without territory, a people scattered among the peoples, would all the same have provoked anti-Judaism.

It would probably have been less violent, and yet even that is not certain; for Judaism would with equal readiness have come into conflict with other religious principles, just as took place in Alexandria and in Rome. This conflict would have lacked the element of deicide, nothing more.

If the cause of anti-Semitism is the existence of the Jews as a nationality, its effect is to make this nationality more tangible for the Jews, to make them more aware of the fact that they are a people.

Some thirty years ago, the world's Jews were divided into emancipated Jews and Jews subject to discriminatory laws. A great part of the Jews suffering under the system of persecution had as their ideal the status of the emancipated Jews, and the greater part of the emancipated Jews were inclined to cast off their Jewishness, to cut themselves off from the Jewish mass still in servitude, with which these emancipated Jews pretended to have no other bonds than those required by the claims of humanity.

This situation is already a thing of the past. A hundred years ago in France, more recently still in Germany, in Austria, and in England, the Jews of the West were freed. The material barriers which separated them from Christian society were destroyed, they were permitted to exercise their rights as men. There followed a golden age for the Jews, an age when every dream soared: all dreams, all ambitions, all appetites. What happened was that a small sec-

tion, the propertied section, of the Jews impetuously rushed to the assault of pleasures from which it had been cut off for so many centuries. It got rotten through contact with the Christian world, which had upon it the same dissolving effect as civilized man has upon the savages to whom he brings alcoholism, syphilis, and tuberculosis. It is obvious that the so-called upper class among Western Jews, and especially among French Jews, is in an advanced state of decay. It is no longer Jewish, it is not Christian, and it is incapable of substituting a philosophy, even less a free morality, for the creed it no longer owns. Whereas the Christian bourgeoisie holds itself upright thanks to the corset of its dogmas, traditions, morality, and of its conventional principles, the Jewish bourgeoisie, deprived of its age-old stays, poisons the Jewish nation with its rottenness, and it will poison the other nations if it does not make up its mind—and this is something we cannot too strongly urge upon it—to adhere to the Christianity of the ruling classes, so that Judaism may get rid of it.

Now, while this category of Jews thought only of the acquisition of fortunes, dignities, honors, decorations, and high positions, while the lesser Jewish bourgeoisie developed intellectually, the ancient ghetto was already being rebuilt. According to economic and political circumstances, anti-Semitism was being born, but these circumstances were only, it should be clearly noted, the immediate causes,

suiting to reawaken ancient prejudices. Anti-Semitism aimed at the restoration of the old legislation against Israel; but this self-assumed purpose was an ideal purpose. What real and practical purpose has it achieved? It has not succeeded and will probably not succeed in France, Austria, and Germany, in again erecting separate dwelling quarters, or in enclosing the Jews in a special area, as is the case in Russia; but thanks to anti-Semitism a moral ghetto has very nearly been re-established. No longer are Jews cloistered in the West; no longer are chains stretched at the ends of the streets on which they dwell, but around them has been created a hostile atmosphere, an atmosphere of distrust, of latent hatreds, of unavowed—and thus all the more powerful—prejudices, a ghetto more terrible than one whence you might escape by rebellion or exile. Even when this animosity is dissembled, the intelligent Jew is aware of it, henceforward he feels a resistance, he has the impression of a wall erected between him and those in whose midst he lives.

What, at the present moment, can you show the Jew of Eastern Europe, who so keenly desired to attain the position of his Western brothers? You can show him the Jew pariah. Is that not a beautiful ideal for him to achieve? And what shall we say to him if he quite simply declares: "My position is abominable; I have obligations and I have no rights; I am reduced to a frightful degree of wretchedness

and degradation. What remedy do you suggest for me? Emancipation? What will your emancipation give me? It will afford me a social situation which will allow me to refine myself; thanks to this I shall acquire new capacities for feeling, and consequently I shall find it more difficult to suffer; it will develop within me a greater sensibility and withal it will not cause to disappear the things which wound that sensibility—quite the opposite. Out of a wretch sometimes benumbed by his wretchedness, it will make a sensitive being who will doubly feel every pinprick, and whose existence will consequently become a thousand times less tolerable. Out of an unconscious pariah it will make a conscious pariah. What advantages shall I gain from this changed position? None. And so I am through with your emancipation; it offers neither a guarantee, nor an assurance, nor an improvement.”

It would need a nationalist to retort to this argument; but were a Jew from Russia thus to address a French Jew, I am not at all certain what the latter could reply. He would probably not even invite his Russian friend to join in seeking means to combat anti-Semitism, for this thought never enters his head. Generally he yields, accepts the blows dealt out to him, and reflects upon that future age when he will be given a better part to play in the world. Only in this respect is he a Christian: when he is struck upon

the right cheek, he offers the left, and even bends his back to invite the whip.

With your kind permission, let us leave the French Jews. They are the best of anti-Semitic agents. Instead of striking back at their enemies, which would raise their personal dignity and heighten their intellectual and moral personality, they—with very few exceptions—make a virtue of their passive acquiescence in the evil and in their own cowardice. They extol the policy of silence and look upon time as a cure-all. The example given by the Austrian Jews seems to them a good one to follow, and they walk in their footsteps. So let us leave them until the time comes when we can stir them up. They are a trifling minority; what are a hundred thousand Jews when more than six million grieve throughout the world? A hundred thousand would be an incalculable force if they were an elite, but they are trash and rubbish, apart from one thin layer of the petty bourgeoisie, which is not yet aware of the new situation created for it by the existence of anti-Semitism and by its evolution. Let us look at things from a higher level. Today the Jewish question is raised more powerfully than ever. From every side a solution is sought for it. Truly it is no longer a matter of knowing whether anti-Semitism is or is not going to win seats in Parliament; it is a matter of knowing what is to be the fate of millions of Jews scattered throughout the four corners of the globe; such is the real problem.

As long as Christianity exists, the Jews, scattered among the peoples, will arouse hatred and wrath, and the position created for them will be either materially or morally inferior; whether they are unable to enjoy their rights as citizens or men, or whether they are exposed to some variety of scorn, the result is the same. What solution is there for this? I am well aware that for the Christian peoples an Armenian solution³ is available, but their sensibilities cannot allow them to envisage that. On the other hand, it is impossible for us Jews to accept conditions of life incompatible with our dignity as men. We have the right to develop ourselves in every fashion, this right must be guaranteed to us in an effective way, and (since I pass by the great majority of emancipated Jews, who are probably quite contented—for which I do not give them any praise) we must discover what remedy we may apply to millions of non-emancipated Jews. I do not think it legitimate to count upon an economic or social transformation. First of all, such a transformation, which I desire and which I shall help as much as lies in my power, seems to me still far away, alas! Furthermore, I am not persuaded that it would bring with it a better situation for the Jews. I believe that some day mankind will be a federation of free groups, not

³ An allusion to the Turkish massacres of the Armenians in 1895 and 1896, perpetrated before the eyes of the European powers.

organized in accordance with the capitalist system; free groups within which the distribution of wealth and the relations between labor and capital will be altogether different from what they are today. Still, these groups must be given a chance to set themselves up and take shape. Why should the Jews not constitute one among them? I see nothing to prevent it, and it is in the development of Jewish nationalism that I see the solution of the Jewish question.

If such is your conviction, people will say to me, why have you fought anti-Semitism here and now, why have you entered upon a struggle from which you knew that you would not emerge victorious? I have fought and will continue to fight anti-Semitism because I think it is the duty of every human being who has been attacked to defend himself. An individual who forswears resistance and who does not know how to make use of the weapons at his disposal—such an individual abdicates his personality, consents to enslavement, and consequently deserves to disappear. It is good to combat anti-Semitism, were it only to enjoy the profits of an armed peace, on the principle that the rights of a belligerent are acknowledged sooner than those of an abject slave. Any Jew who does not rise up against anti-Semitism plunges one degree lower in moral abjection.

Having said so much, I must explore the advan-

tages which would accrue to the Jews from their establishment as a nation and, finally, how the nationalism I have just commended can come to terms with the socialist ideas which have been, are, and will remain my ideas. I need not deal for the moment with the means by which this Jewish nation will finally be created.

Nationalism is for me the expression of collective liberty and the condition of individual liberty. I describe as a "nation" an environment in which the individual can develop himself and expand in perfect fashion. Let us justify these definitions.

If there is one undeniable thing, it is the existence of special affinities among a certain number of human beings. Whatever may be the reasons and the causes which brought these affinities about, they exist. When, how were they born? To discover the answer we should have to dive into the darkest depths of history, and we are aware of these affinities only when the beings possessed of them are established as groups. From that day forth, moreover, these affinities strengthen themselves, become better defined, and thanks to them the personality of the group is created. In consequence of the collectivity's reaction upon the individuals which make it up, the individual—thanks to these very affinities, thanks to the favorable environment which they have allowed him to set up—in his turn acquires a personality, and thus serves to augment the traits of the

group to which he belongs. Great or little, such groups are nations.

We call a nation free when it can materially, intellectually, and morally develop itself, without any external trammels whatever being placed upon that development. If one nation, by reason of conquest or in any other fashion causes another nation to become dependent upon it, there will remain of the second nation only a certain number of denationalized individuals, that is, persons no longer able to give expression to their special collective spirit, that is, persons having lost their collective freedom.

These individuals are the vanquished, the conquered, are therefore relegated to a state of inferiority, and if they are unwilling to disappear, they lose their own proper freedom. Why don't they disappear, men will ask, why do they continue to cling to ancient forms which, during one moment of time, they represented? Here are idle questions. At the very most it could be said in reply that only such human groups as are still amorphous, possessed only of ill-defined traits and a vague awareness of themselves, are capable of letting themselves be absorbed.

Firmly established and homogeneous groups, having settled traits and a clear-cut awareness of themselves, necessarily resist. It is as true of collectivities as it is of individual men that the weak yield and the strong persevere. However that may be, we are here confronted with an historic fact: the mainte-

nance and the survival in the midst of the nations of certain individuals belonging to different nationalities, by which I mean men who have preserved forms of being different from the forms of those who surround them. These individuals, by the very fact that they have held out, suffer a constraint, since all peoples have an inevitable tendency to reduce the heterogeneous elements existing among them. Hence their freedom is diminished, and if they continue in their stubborn refusal to yield, they will be able to keep their individual liberty only on the condition that they are able to win back the collective liberty which they have lost. In short, the rebirth of their nationality is the prerequisite of their individual freedom. The constraint under which they labor likewise prevents their contributing everything that lies within them, a portion of their energies being spent upon that resistance, upon that struggle, which alone allows them to retain the capacity for development, without that development being able to take place. Once again, it is the re-establishment of their nationality which will give them an opportunity to flower.

This is the case of the Russian or Rumanian Jews who are in no position, under the present circumstances, to contribute in the measure of which they are capable. Tomorrow, Western Jewry may find itself in the same situation, obliged to spend its strength in the struggle against anti-Semitism—eter-

nal struggle, perpetual strife, built of victories and of disasters, eminently suited to exhaust the minority which wages it.

For a Jew, the word nationalism should mean freedom. A Jew who today may declare, "I am a nationalist," will not be saying in any special, precise or clear-cut way, I am a man who seeks to rebuild a Jewish state in Palestine and who dreams of conquering Jerusalem. He will be saying, "I want to be a man fully free, I want to enjoy the sunshine, I want to have a right to my dignity as a man. I want to escape the oppression, to escape the outrage, to escape the scorn with which men seek to overwhelm me." At certain moments in history, nationalism is for human groups the manifestation of the spirit of freedom.

In saying this, I do not in the least deny internationalist ideas. When socialists fight nationalism, in fact they are fighting protectionism and national exclusivism; they fight that chauvinistic, narrow, and absurd patriotism which leads peoples to set themselves up against each other as rivals or as enemies determined to grant each other neither reprieve nor mercy. Such is the selfishness of nations, as hateful as the selfishness of individuals and as deserving of contempt. Internationalism obviously presupposes the existence of nations. To be an internationalist means to set up bonds between nations not of diplomatic friendship but of human brotherhood; it

means to abolish the political-economic structure of our present nations, since this structure has been created only to protect the peoples' private interests, or rather those of their governments, at the expense of neighboring peoples. To suppress the frontiers does not mean to produce one sole amalgam of all the inhabitants of the globe. The federative concept, the concept of a fragmented humanity made up of a multitude of cellular organisms, is one of the commonplace notions of international socialism and even of revolutionary anarchism. Granted that in its ideal development this theory conceives that the cells which will thus come together will be knit by virtue of affinities not entailed by any ethnological, religious, or national tradition. But this is of little import as long as the theory allows for groups. Moreover, our task is only to deal with our own day, and our own day requires us to seek the most suitable means for assuring men their freedom. Now in our day and generation, it is by virtue of traditional principles that men wish to associate together. To this end they invoke certain identities of origin, their common past, similar ways of looking upon phenomena, beings, and things; a common philosophy, a common history. They must be allowed to band together.

But, object certain socialists, in furthering the development of nationalism, you encourage unity among classes in such fashion that the workers for-

get the economic struggle and link themselves to their enemies. This result, however, is not necessary. Such an alliance is generally only temporary and—be it noted—it is most frequently not the property-holders who require it of the poor and of the workers, but rather the latter who force the rich to go along with them. Moreover, is it not necessary for the wretched mass of working-class Jews that, before it can escape from its proletarian wretchedness, it should possess its freedom, which means the opportunity to struggle and to conquer? That problem will certainly arise when, for instance, access to certain countries will be refused to the Jews who leave Russia.

I find nothing in nationalism which would be contrary to socialist orthodoxy, and I, who am orthodox in nothing, do not hesitate for an instant in accepting nationalism alongside internationalism. On the contrary, I believe that for internationalism to take root, it is necessary that human groups should previously have won their autonomy; it is necessary for them to be able to express themselves freely, it is necessary for them to be aware of what they are.

I am well aware that another reproach will be leveled at me. At a moment when all things are unifying themselves, I shall be told, you aspire to divide. We must make ourselves clear. What do we mean when we speak of the unification or the homogeneity of mankind? We mean that, in part thanks

to economic causes which make for easier intercourse, in part thanks to intellectual causes, the differences which formerly separated peoples are becoming less acute. An even level of culture is being instituted because a uniform social condition is emerging, yet even this is true only for a few Western and New World nations. We also mean that the domain of common ideas is broadening daily, that a communion is establishing itself without regard for frontiers between individuals possessing that maximum of awareness which places intelligences on the same level, and that the number of these individuals is daily growing. This is a matter of record; must we draw from it as an inevitable consequence a kind of dogma which would require that everything be done to make men uniform? I do not see the usefulness of this. Nothing seems to me so needful for mankind as variety. Those who say the opposite make a serious mistake, or, to state it more accurately, they forget a capital fact. For them mankind is an anthropological expression, a political expression, an economic expression; yet mankind must be something more in addition: it must be an esthetic expression. That it may not cease to be such, we must first of all preserve the variety it now possesses. Men have within their reach a certain number of general ideas which belong to the treasury of the species. But each individual has his own special way of expressing these general ideas and these conceptions. The same fol-

lows for groups of individuals; they render beauty differently, they have plastic arts which are not the same; the matter at their disposal—the matter common to all—they render harmonious in diverse fashions. Human richness is built out of this variety. Thus every human group is necessary, is useful to mankind; it contributes in bringing beauty into the world, it is a source of forms, of thoughts, of images. Why should we regiment the human species, why should we make it bow down before a single rule, by what right should we impose upon it a canon from which it must not stray?

Then, too, are most socialists, even the internationalists among them, altogether consistent, do they suit their actions to their teachings? Are they not now demanding—and rightly—autonomy for the Cubans, the Cretans, the Armenians? Do they not recognize that all men have the right to fight for their freedom, and do they not join this freedom to the claims of nationality?

Can anyone tell me in what respect the Jews are different? Is it because they have been so long deprived of their own soil? Because a sepulchre takes the place of their Temple? Because their slavery has lasted longer? What do these things matter as long as they have endured. An accumulation of mishaps, of tortures, of contumely, of hatred—is this a lesser title to sympathy? Ah! I know it well, the poor Jew who is buffeted and slaughtered, he who is op-

pressed, all these wretches must expiate the crime committed by those—the Romans—who, in crucifying a man, created a god, and that people which, unhappily for it, gave birth to a divinity must be treated as a people of deicides.

However, the season must have arrived when the wanderer may find himself an asylum, rest his heavy head, and stretch out his weary limbs. How many centuries have vanished since the day when the aged Ezekiel, imploring his God, said to him, "Have mercy on wandering Oholibah," that fornicating Oholibah which was Jerusalem in the eyes of his prophet's rage. As in those distant ages, the Jews still wander over the pathways of the globe; how much longer will they thus wander? Each year, when the evening of the Passover comes, those among them who have preserved their faith thrice intone the hallowed wish: "*Le-shanah ha-baah be-yerushalayim.*" I imagine that, for those who still sigh in some ghetto, as for their medieval ancestors, these words signify, "Next year we shall be in a land of freedom, we shall be men, it will be allowed us to live in the open sunlight, which belongs to all save us alone."

The Jews of the West have forgotten the meaning of these words, but they will rediscover them perhaps sooner than they think, when the land in which they dwell will have become for them like the ancient land of *Mitzrayim*. May they from now on know

that they must not expect succor from heaven or even the help of powerful allies. The Jews will find no salvation except in themselves. It is through their own strength that they will free themselves, that they will regain that dignity which men have caused them to lose. And what solution will they then see before them? The despicable and vile party among them, without convictions and without any motive other than personal interest, will be converted; to that end it will not have to overcome any scruples. Whatever the believers may do and whatever may be done by the unbelievers who will never resign themselves to being turncoats, they will the more intensely feel that they are free—they, themselves, as individuals—when the collectivity to which they belong will be free, when this landless nation which is the Jewish nation will have earth of its own of which it may dispose without constraint.

Such are your cherished ideas and your cherished ideal. You wish to be yourselves; is there anything more legitimate and more exalted? You are not the toilers of today but the toilers of the future. That is why I have been happy to bring you my sympathy and my fraternity. But in concluding I still have this to say to you: Never forget that you have been the people, as Renan said, which brought justice into the world, and earn yourself forgiveness for having given a god to men by being for ever the soldiers of justice and of human brotherhood.

NATIONALISM AND JEWISH EMANCIPATION¹

THOSE WHO ARE ENGROSSED by the Jewish problem and strive to resolve it approach it from the most various points of view, save that which alone would be logical—I mean the Jewish point of view.

Indeed, in this the anti-Semites, philo-Semites, and the Jews agree: they are forever looking at Israel in relation to other nations, but never in relation to itself. It is true that, the anti-Semites apart, they deny Israel the right to call itself a people and recognize Israel only as a religious faith, a cruel embarrassment to people who have no religious convictions and who nevertheless are very eager to be Jews. "That against which the Jews protest," an honorable rabbi has said, "is the use of the words 'Jewish people' as applied to contemporary Israelites: Let it be repeated, they are a religious denomination and even when uttered by one of their champions, this mistaken phrase offends and irritates them." I presume that this rabbi sometimes says his prayers and that he does not omit from their number the

¹ A lecture given during the winter of 1899 and published in the *Echo Sioniste*, March and April, 1901.

Eighteen Benedictions and that he says with compunction, addressing himself to God: "Sound upon a great ram's horn the hour of our deliverance and raise a banner to assemble our exiled brothers and gather us together from the four corners of the earth. . . . Set up soon in Jerusalem the throne of David." I do not undertake to explain this contradiction which seems to me irreverent; I state a fact, and that fact is that everyone, whatever his feelings about Judaism may be, asserts that the Jew should be the everlasting servant of the nations. The philosophers who seek to inspire the Jews with a taste for this condition talk about "the servant of mankind." And yet there is a difference here between the anti-Semites and the philo-Semites. The former, who have no intention of defending Israel, look upon it as a people endowed with special powers and in certain respects superior to the peoples whom they rejoice in calling Aryans. The latter strive to prove that the Jew is in all things similar to those surrounding him and that in every respect you can even detect in him a certain inferiority, which is one way for the philo-Semites to show their anti-Semitism. It must be admitted that the Jews are delighted with this, and nothing could prevent their believing in the genius of Anatole Leroy Beaulieu.²

² A Gentile historian whose books on the Jewish question—*Israël chez les nations* (1893) and *L'Antisémitisme* (1897)—were written in a vein similar to Jewish *apologiae* and were therefore quoted frequently by Jewish writers.

What is more, this is the tactic, the ancient, the everlasting tactic: "Make yourself small, small as a bird, small as a mite. Therein lies your salvation, for your enemy will come, he will not see you, and will pass you by."

This has always been preached by those who would proclaim themselves the leaders of the Jews. "Make yourself humble," say they to him among them who owns nothing, the poor wretch, the miserable fellow; "those who hate you will forgive you because of your humility. Display your qualifications as a good servant, as a loyal subject, show to those who call themselves your friends as well as to those who are your enemies the servile gifts which are yours and all the abjectness they can expect of you. Tell them that you are easy-going, essentially conservative, devoted to the protection of society, the defense of the throne, and even the safe-guarding of the altar." Thus you will win forgiveness and a little table, and you will find consolation for the contumelies, the hatreds, the angers, the sufferings, and the misery by reflecting upon those of your people, so highly privileged, whom destiny has entrusted with the painful and fruitful task of piling up capital in preparation for the state of the future, and you will wait until the last traces of enmity shall have disappeared from the hearts of men.

To these principles is added a theory, that of assimilation—a bastard doctrine, since it consists in

saying: "Do not distinguish yourself in anything from those among whom you dwell, except by your religious beliefs and practices, by your hygienic rules, by your ritual slaughter, and above all by circumcision," which amounts to urging the Jews to abandon all their individual and moral traits and to distinguish themselves only by a physical sign certain to single them out for the hatred of the other denominations. The Jews who advocate these tactics seem naïvely to believe that anti-Semitism has solely economic causes; they fail to see that its basis is religious prejudice. Anti-Semitism, springing in part from religious pathology, will exist as long as Christianity exists. Nothing will be able to conquer it, nothing will be able to do away with it. Together with the Gospels and with the dogmas of the Church, horror of the Jew enters into the brains of Christians, and anti-Semitic prejudice constitutes a part of the Christian mentality. In vain will the Jew metamorphose himself; as long as he continues to exist, the prejudice will live, for his transformations will never obliterate the initial cause: the blaming of the Jews for the Passion of Jesus. Do we not see that the Jew who ceases to be a Jew continues to suffer because of his origin? Thus was it with the Marranos of old, the Chuetas in the Balearics, the Frankists in Poland.³ Were the whole

³ The Marranos were Spanish Jews forcibly converted to Christianity during the fifteenth century; the word was applied in

mass of the Jews to be converted tomorrow, a class of New Christians would arise which would be prey to the same wrath and the same hatred as now assail the Jews. Every solution of anti-Semitism thus seems to me chimerical as long as it is sought for in a presumed assimilation which cannot be real.

Are we then to give the anti-Semites a free hand? Certainly not, and it is not I who would suggest gratuitously suffering insults and freely offering oneself up to blows. Moreover, it is worthy of note that those who generally profess nonresistance are the most assimilationist of the Jews, those who profess themselves to be in all things like their Christian fellow citizens. So we must fight. Why? In order to destroy anti-Semitism? I have said that it can never be destroyed; for brief periods its violent manifestations can be held in check, but we shall see it reappear as circumstances may dictate. The Jew is all too necessary to the Christian peoples, anti-Semitism all too useful to the propertied classes, the statesmen, the leading circles of the Christian

contempt to the converts, who were rightly suspected of having remained loyal to Judaism.

The Chuetas inhabited the Balearic Islands, and like the Marranos were forcibly converted in the fifteenth century. Their descendants remained a separate group and for centuries did not intermarry with the natives.

The Frankists were the followers of Jacob Frank, a false Messiah of the eighteenth century active in Poland. Frank embraced Christianity and formed a separate Christian sect whose members did not intermarry.

nations. If the Jew did not exist as an outlet for the wrath of those who are despoiled, and thus as savior of the strongboxes anointed with the waters of baptism, certainly he would be invented. He is a pariah; emancipated or not, he will always be useful as a scapegoat for the Christian nations. So it is as an outcast that he must defend himself, through duty to his own being, for every human creature must know how to resist oppression and preserve his right to total development, his freedom to be and *to be himself*.

This is why we must not, as do the emancipated Jews, look upon ourselves solely with an eye to anti-Semitism, this is why we must not seek what the peoples among whom we dwell might expect of us; we must seek what we can extract from ourselves, and to this end we must not Christianize Judaism but, on the contrary, Judaize the Jew, teach him to live for, and to be, himself. This is why we should answer those who tell us, "You should labor for humanity," by saying, "Yes, but our ambition is to work for mankind in other fashion than do those dungheaps which by their decay bring forth new flowers and new fruits. We are through with being eternally exploited by all peoples, a troop of cattle and of serfs, the butt of every lash, a flock to which men even deny a stable, a horde of people denying themselves the right to have a free soil or to live and die in liberty. We do not want to bow our backs,

and we will gladly let our rich men—without brains, without force, without will, without brotherhood, and without pity—supplicate those around them and say: 'See how much like you we are; we have all your vices and even all your virtues, we forego our own thoughts, our own ideals, we have the same abject souls, the same fears, and the same cruelties.' " We stand up and we say to them: "We are ever the ancient stiff-necked people, the unruly and rebel nation; we want to be ourselves, and we shall know well how to conquer the right which is ours, not only to be men but also to be Jews." And who are we? We, the intellectuals, the proletarians, and the poor people of Israel. Is not this enough? When Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to Palestine, there came back to Jerusalem only 40,000 men. They were the proletarians, the wretched, the righteous of the Psalms, the revolutionary prophets; the rich remained in Babylon. They must still remain there, for it is the poor who make nations; the rich do not know how to create, they do not even know how to give.

So here we have the question stated at its proper level. What do we care about some hundreds of thousands of Jews, happy in this world, possessed of earthly goods, ready for everything, for every surrender, for every betrayal, for every cowardice—they have proved this and each day they prove it anew—if it will preserve for them material well-

being, which has long since become their ideal and their god. They are happy where they are; let them remain there. They are patriots, jingoes, even toadies; let them remain so. We care nothing about them, on the contrary, we must pluck them from us, cast them aside as the filth which poisons us, which defiles us, which degrades us. Let them become Christians if the Christians will have them; we want no part of them. Those who attract us, those who are our own, are our martyred brothers, our enslaved brothers, those whose soul is our soul, the eternal soul of the people of Israel. The former are emancipated, the latter are in bondage. Now, O philosophers, economists, moralists, and politicians, go find the latter and say to them with outstretched hand: "See, we bring you emancipation, freedom. Freedom like that of the Jews of Galicia, emancipation like that of the Jews of Algeria.⁴ Henceforth you will be free, but you will be beaten and pillaged at Lemberg as at Jasto; you will be emancipated, but men will kill you, will drive you forth as at Algiers and Oran. Your fellow citizens will settle their quarrels upon your freeman's back. Does not this fate enchant you? So you forget that many

⁴ In 1870 the Crémieux decree emancipated Algerian Jewry. During the years of the Dreyfus Affair, especially in 1897 and 1899, anti-Semitic propaganda was particularly virulent in Algeria. Several pogroms took place of which the official Jews of France preferred to take no notice. Not only Bernard Lazare but also Clémenceau attacked their pusillanimity.

among you will achieve honor and glory, and that to this end they will even deign to make use of you, of the mass that you are? You do not remember that they will be able to sell your votes to get themselves ribbons, that they will rent your good right arm and your ballot to the highest bidder, as in Bukovina and, again, in Algeria. Aren't you satisfied? What on earth do you want?" This people, starved, miserable, and in despair, must not answer, "I am satisfied." It must say, "I don't want to live this way any longer; I don't want to have against me not only my own rich men who exploit me and sell me, but in addition the rich and the poor of other peoples who in the name of these rich men of mine persecute me and hunt me down."

In order that these poor souls may give such an answer, we must show them the way, we must study their minds, root out of their souls that servile fear, that blissful admiration aroused in them by those among them who have been able to improve their fortunes, we must make them understand that they are a people having a right to life and to true freedom.

To those who have undertaken this task, people say, "Be careful; by asserting that you are a people, a nation, you justify the anti-Semites, you will provoke new excesses and new hatreds." But throughout the sixteen years you have been assailed in France, you have never ceased to protest that

you are no longer Jews, you call yourselves Frenchmen of the Israelite faith, and every day the fury against you becomes more acute and more open. Do you think that fury would have been worse had you been willing to be a people in the midst of a people?

Yet for an instant I will admit that in calling ourselves a nation we shall justify and increase the wrath which is already so great.

You ask us, you rich men—for the poor do not speak—to sacrifice our convictions, our faith in ourselves, our desire to rescue millions of our brothers from their abominable lot, and all this to what end? For the satisfaction of safeguarding your material interests, for they are the be-all and the end-all? In the name of what do you ask this of us? In the name of religious brotherhood? That is not enough, and for many of us it has no meaning. In the name of solidarity? Take care; if you invoke the solidarity of Jews among themselves, you come to us, and we want no part of you; you would be the ruin of us, you would poison us with your rottenness. Yet let us overlook that. You speak in the name of solidarity. What was that solidarity, and what have you made of it?

Jewish solidarity was born of that national brotherhood which was strengthened throughout the centuries by all the discriminatory laws under which we have suffered. It was the light under the sky of Judea, on the banks of the Jordan, on the

shores of the Galilean lakes, in the mountains of Palestine; it grew up in exile, near the waters of Babylon and during the wars of independence, when the Jewish conscience reached its greatest heights, when hearts swelled with the same breath of heroism; and it did not perish with Jerusalem and with freedom. During the long years of bondage, it was the consolation and the strength of Israel, whom the peoples struck as a hammer strikes the anvil. Jewish brotherhood and solidarity were strengthened in tears and in blood. Today, tears and blood can still cause their rebirth in the souls of those among the rich who are not yet gangrenous. Sorrow, that great reconciler of souls, accomplished what joy and triumph could not have done. It taught those who languished under contempt and under blows, those whose faces were covered with spittle and whose backs were flogged, that nothing is as dear to a groaning heart as the breast, itself lacerated, of the brother in suffering and in despair. Each of Israel's tears, and his tears were many, created one of the links which formed the sturdy chain by which the Jews have long been bound the one to the other. In the terrible school of persecution, the Jews acquired the highest of human virtues; one of their most unalloyed glories is that men could one day reproach them for this intimate and profound brotherhood. When the law of natural love will have become once more the law of men the

world over, when the feeling of solidarity will have replaced egoism, the principle of individual competition, and the struggle for life, it will be remembered that formerly this solidarity was called a Jewish virtue. But it was from the shadowy consciousness of the masses, from the brains of its prophets, its philosophers, and its poets that the great ideas welled up; there were worked out the social virtues to which the upper classes finally submitted. For these classes are the obstacle against which the multitude and the thinkers sprung from the multitude must struggle. Thus the moment there took shape degrees in Jewish misery, among the privileged classes the sense of solidarity perished. In France, as early as the eighteenth century, the Portuguese Jews settled in Bordeaux where they enjoyed special rights and sought to separate themselves from the commonalty of Jews. When the question arose of improving the condition of the Jews in Alsace, these inhabitants of Bordeaux protested; they asserted that they had nothing in common with this herd of insignificant people wallowing in their villages, objects of general scorn, whereas the sons of the Marranos already had the right to hold up their heads.⁵ Today we find the same feelings with re-

⁵ An allusion to the petitions in which the Sephardic communities of France protested against the French Revolution's general emancipation of the Jews. The French Sephardim, who had enjoyed special privileges under the *ancien régime*, ob-

gard to the Russian Jews and the wretched Algerian Jews among the English, French, and German Jewish bourgeoisie.

This attitude of the Bordeaux Jews gradually spread among the Jews of the West in proportion as they recovered their dignity as men. On the day when the dawn of freedom shone for one tiny parcel of the people of Israel, Jewish solidarity slowly began to weaken. At the beginning of this century, it was still sturdy and powerful. The bond which more than a thousand years of anguish and sorrow had forged could not be so quickly broken. Too many memories lived in souls; the thought of the sufferings of those who were still bowed under the yoke recalled similar sufferings, reopened old wounds. It took more than one generation for such things to be obliterated. For half a century accounts of the sufferings of distant brothers called to mind pictures of the days so close at hand when the condition of the Western Jews was that of slaves or beasts of burden. Moreover, the old people were there, and their mere presence sufficed to keep green the memory of the years of sorrow. As the grandfathers passed away, the instinct of solidarity grew weaker among the Jews of the West. It was already on the wane when the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* was founded,

jected to being lumped together with the poorer Jewish populations of Alsace and Lorraine.

hardly an institution able to give it new strength. The *Alliance* quickly became a purely charitable work or an educational enterprise, a chauvinistic institution setting itself the object of cultivating French influence in the Orient, that is to say, Catholic influence.⁶

This weakening process was inevitable. Indeed, when the Jew had broken the barriers which separated him from the rest of the world, he slowly de-Judaized himself, and, what is more, as I have often written and as we cannot too often repeat, he became corrupt upon contact with Christian society; he lost his own virtues and acquired only the vices of those who surrounded him. He owed his qualities to the environment which he was leaving, to a special upbringing which suited the pattern of that environment, and these qualities had further been strengthened by the conditions of life which had been imposed on him for centuries. The environment and the conditions disappeared abruptly, instead of being modified in accordance with their own rhythm; hence the qualities could not be transformed, which would have been useful, but simply disappeared.

⁶ The *Alliance Israélite Universelle*, founded in 1860 as an international Jewish organization with headquarters in Paris, soon became a specifically French Jewish organization whose main achievement was the establishment of a widespread system of public schools throughout the Balkans, North Africa, and the Near East. These schools for the poorer Jewish populations were definitely French in language and curriculum.

One thing alone might have been able to save them: a persistence of national consciousness, but this consciousness day by day became feebler; day by day the Jew felt more ashamed to call himself a people and even to call himself a Jew.

It must likewise be noted that the Jew felt that one of the guarantees of the freedom he had acquired was precisely that he renounce his nationality. If only he had been able to take exactly the same attitude as his non-Jewish fellow citizen, to lay claim to his rights to the extent of remembering that, the moment he suffered oppression, as he does now in Algeria, rebellion was the most sacred of duties! But no, he put himself in the position of someone who has won a revocable charter. That was the mistake and the sin of the Western Jew; he was not able worthily to enjoy his freedom; he did not look upon it as something which was due him, which had been stolen from him and which he was recapturing, but as a thing granted to him, of which he must make himself worthy. Even in that which concerned his own independence, he looked upon himself from the point of view of Christian anti-Semitism, for which the Jew can only be tolerated in a Christian state. And such is the burden of the words generally addressed to Jews on solemn occasions from the eminence of the rabbinical pulpit and elsewhere: "Make yourselves deserving," they are told, "of the benefits which you owe to the Great Revolution, or to the

more or less liberal constitutions of the countries in which you live." For a hundred years the Jew has assumed the position of a poor beggar to whom, through goodness of heart, a gift has been given. He is unaware that nothing whatever has been given to him, that he has merely retrieved that of which men had abominably despoiled him, namely his rights of man, and that, if it is his duty, wherever he may be, to fulfil his duties as a citizen and labor at the tasks of human progress, nothing can require him to forget his past or to forswear his own personality.

Nevertheless, he has forgotten and he has forsworn. He has freely cut himself off, pushing far to one side all Jewish education, ignoring his history, what he had been, what his people had done, what had been its thought. But he could not later bridge the gap which had thus been produced in his spirit. He was able to absorb into himself, like a schoolboy, the history, philosophy, literature, and art of the countries of which he became a citizen, but that art, that literature, that philosophy, that history could not belong to his very fiber, or make his being deeply vibrate; and it is true that in Christian societies the Jew can only be an assimilator; he will be a creator only on the day when he comes again to draw on Jewish sources, those wellsprings into which a Heine could dive so deep.

The Jews of the West having such feelings, such desires, such wishes, what could become of solidarity

among them? It could only disappear. In the first place, a great portion of these Jews belonged to the bourgeoisie, which is a ferociously individualist and selfish class; inevitably they became egoists and individualists. That which was formerly solidarity became philanthropy, that excellent although provisional social insurance. The rich Jew of Paris, of Berlin, or of London who agrees to assist the Galician, Russian, or Moroccan Jew does not extend a fraternal hand to someone of his own people; more often he makes it clear that he is helping the poor and not the Jews. Charity takes the place of fraternity.

But matters went much worse the moment anti-Semitism had listed Jewish solidarity among its grievances. Since anti-Semitism represented the Jews as an indissolubly united mass, constituting a state within the state, a society whereof each member supported his fellow, these Jews cried out against such a picture; this whole Jewish bourgeoisie, through the voices of its scholars, its moralists, and even its priests, protested. It produced numberless studies and tomes to prove that this solidarity did not exist, or at least that it should not exist.

When Peter saw that he was in danger, he said, concerning Jesus, "I know not the man," and he said it three times. The Jews of the West, confronted with the martyrdom of the Russian Jews, likewise said, "We know not these men." A few came to their help

when the Russian Jews were forced to quit the land of sorrows in order to go dwell on freer soils, but those few were determined to prove that it was no special fraternity which gave rise to this charity, those few took glory in not belonging to the family of those whose hands once more seized the staff of the eternal Jew, of the ancient vagabond whose feet are rather tired.

So this is what they have done to solidarity—those who now come addressing us in its name. Let us take the French Jews; well do I know them, and I know of what they are capable; they did not limit themselves to rejecting all solidarity with foreign Jews, they even wanted to hold them responsible for evils which their own cowardice alone begot. They were not satisfied with becoming more jingoist than the French people of France; as in all countries where the Jews have been emancipated, they have voluntarily shattered the solidarity which existed among them to such an extent that, even if some three dozen of them were to be found to defend one of their martyred brothers, thousands would have been found to mount watch around Devil's Island, along with the most devoted champions of the fatherland. The Jews have drawn away from each other, and shame of the Jewish name has come upon them. Why do they make approaches to the poor? It is up to the poor, to the persecuted, to tell them: "Long enough have I espoused your cause; you no longer

have the right to invoke a solidarity at which you have blushed."

These Jews are suffering the consequences of the assimilation they wanted, they demanded, and they still defend; at least they must be able to accept these consequences and allow freedom of action to those who otherwise understand their dignity as men and their future liberty. Today, they are hardly Jews any more—which is what they wanted—but they are citizens whom prejudice has relegated to an inferior position, and in ceasing to be Jews, they have lost the power which would have allowed them to combat that prejudice and its effects. What do they want us to do about it? Do they ask us to be like them? We will have none of it. We leave them free to protest by saying that they are only a denomination and that they have the right to constitute that confession. We do not gainsay it; their right is obvious, undebatable, but what does it matter, since, in spite of their begging, their reasoning, their purely scientific argument, men will always look upon them as individuals set apart, forming, if not an *ethnos*, at least a special group. We know of course that they are ready for every betrayal, for every abjectness, in order to prove to the hilt that they have abandoned everything which binds them to the past and everything which joins them to their brothers in this world who suffer and languish, stripped

of their freedom and their rights; they will thus succeed only in increasing and justifying the scorn which is shown them, and in lessening their capacity for resistance so greatly that they will find themselves, individuals without links between each other, facing groups who will have learned from them the solidarity they have cast aside. Is not all this one more reason for us to become indifferent toward them and to refuse our attention to that which a mere desire for personal security inspires in them? This Jewish bourgeoisie, rich and not Jewish, is our garbage, our rubbish; we must rid ourselves of it; and if it is unable to protect itself against anti-Semitism, it is not our job to help it, if for this purpose we must forswear higher ends.

To those thousands upon thousands of wretched Jews who sigh in the ghettos of Russia, of Rumania, of Persia, and of Morocco, who cry out toward the light, shake their chains, and seek to burst their bonds, to all these people we say: Assimilation will burden you with new chains and bonds; you will find salvation only on the day when you dwell upon a soil which belongs to you. Assimilation will give you only a makeshift freedom; the law will confer this freedom upon you, passions and prejudices will constantly repeal it. You will lose a portion of your strength in struggling with the enemies whom you will find confronting you, and this strife will wear you out, will make you unable to produce—or else

you will give up the fight, and you will fall into the lowest category of beings. May we not hope that with social changes hatred of the Jew will disappear? See how in Austria people are already beginning to say, "Socialism will be anti-Semitic, or it will not be."⁷ In all the writers calling for reform you will find the same injustice where you are concerned. Drumont leans upon Proudhon, upon Fourier, upon Tous-senel, and he could appeal to Bakunin, who never referred to Marx without calling him "the German Jew."⁸ So do not insist upon entering a house where you will be insulted, on sitting down at a table whence you will be driven away. Learn how to build your own house, a house where you will welcome all

⁷ Christian Socialism in Austria under the leadership of the anti-Semite Lueger grew into a mass movement during the nineties of the last century and had some influence on the Socialist party, which regarded Austrian Jewry as a "reactionary element."

⁸ Anti-Semitic tendencies among socialist writers were especially strong in France. Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865) attacked the Jews on several occasions and provided such professional anti-Semites as Edouard Drumont with an excellent genealogy. Proudhon was somewhat influenced by the anti-Semitism of the famous political philosopher François-Charles-Marie Fourier (1772-1837), who accused the Jews of having become a nation of "parasites, merchants, usurers." Alphonse Toussenel's famous book, *Les Juifs, Rois de l'Epoque* (1847), was not only inspired by Fourier but was in fact published by the *Fourierist Librairie de l'Ecole Sociétaire*. Its principal thesis was that the Jews, together with the Saint-Simonists, dominated France. Michael Bakunin (1814-1876), the Russian anarchist and one of the leaders of the First International, though personal hatred led him to speak of Marx in this way, cannot properly be called an anti-Semite.

men, so that it may be said: "From Judah are come forth justice and brotherhood."

To all this one objection is made, an objection which seems serious and which is specious. "In dedicating yourself," it is said, "to the dream of re-establishing the Jewish people and giving it a soil, you neglect the present position of the Jews. Perhaps you are right, but you will surely agree that you cannot reach your goal until long years have passed; perhaps it will even take a century. Meanwhile, throughout the whole world the Jews are governed by discriminatory laws. In Russia, they are confined within a limited area—to leave it means to exile themselves without any hope of return; they are crowded together in cities where they die of starvation, where psychological wretchedness wastes them away, where they constitute a vast crowd of jobless and beggars. Other cities are closed to them, they are driven from the countryside, taxes are levied upon them thanks to which the authorities build high schools open only to the Christian orthodox, and only a tiny fraction of them is permitted to practice liberal professions. In order to win some trifling advantages, you must be wealthy, and even then you are always subject to the whims of the bureaucrats and the powerful. In Rumania, they are viewed as Rumanians when they have to pay the blood tax, and as foreigners when they ask to enjoy the privileges of Rumanian citizenship. In Morocco, in Persia,

their state is even worse; they can be massacred with impunity."

It is true, we might reply, that Jews are murdered with equal impunity in Galicia, in Bohemia, and in Algeria, the latter a land in which they enjoy the inestimable advantage of being French citizens, and we might ask our opponents what they intend to do for these emancipated Jews. They will answer by pointing to rights which cannot be made effective before courts sold out to the anti-Semites, and to laws no one observes and no one applies. In other words, to those who say, "What do you expect to do for the Jews who are under the yoke of discriminatory legislation," we could reply, "What do you want to do for the Jewish citizens of various countries in the West and in Africa who are under the yoke of the anti-Semites?" But this would be no real answer, for the impotence of the assimilated is neither an argument nor an excuse.

What is more, the question should be otherwise stated, in a general fashion. To nationalism is opposed emancipation, but by a crass distortion, emancipation is made synonymous with assimilation. Emancipation is not assimilation. We want the emancipation of the Jews, we do not want their assimilation.

Then, too, is it not a strange thing to see nationalism and emancipation as opposites? Is it not we who are the true emancipators, since we want a total, in-

tegral emancipation, whereas assimilation will never be more than a disguised slavery? It is true that on the other hand the Zionists reject the idea of emancipation, and this again is because they confuse it with assimilation.

To them we must say: Nationalism and emancipation are in no way contradictory; quite the opposite. One implies the other, and to my mind the emancipation of the Jews is the necessary prerequisite for their nationalization. We refuse to see in emancipation a solution; to us it is merely a stage along the road, and it behooves us not to leave to the assimilationists the task of demanding the emancipation of the Jews who do not enjoy their rights.

In order to understand what sort of emancipation we demand for the Jews, we must make clear what are the rights of which they are deprived. First of all, they are deprived of their rights as men, secondly, of their rights as citizens. As men, they suffer every constraint; they cannot move freely from one place to another; they are subject to special taxes; they are governed by restrictive and special legislation. Not only is public employment forbidden to them, but also certain professions; moreover, nothing effectively protects them against violence and extortion. Never shall we cease laying claim to these rights of man, for, in securing them, the Jews of the oppressing countries can develop themselves intellectually and morally, can emerge from the abject

state in which the greater part of them stagnate. Only when they are men, enjoying their prerogatives as men, will their minds broaden, will they be able to acquire new knowledge, will they understand what is expected of them. If they abdicated all claim to these rights and to their exercise, if they ceased to complain that they have been despoiled of them, they would accept slavery, they would sink even lower, and that we do not want. It is true that the assimilated Jews of the Western countries sometimes proffer alms to the Jews in servitude, but we do not often hear them protest and rebel against the treatment meted out to those beings who are their brothers—a fact they never remember. What we want is to give this nation of the poor and suffering, of proletarians, an awareness of what it is; to this end we must as much as possible develop its individuality, its personality, make its members whole men, in brotherly solidarity with each other. Precisely because we want to make men of them, we do not abandon our insistence on their rights as individuals. Precisely because we want them to be men in brotherly solidarity, we care little about the political emancipation which precedes assimilation. In France, in Germany, in England, in Italy there are a few deputies and senators who congratulate themselves on their achievement; this is not enough to make me rejoice, and I am not satisfied when I perceive Mr. Singer in the Reichstag and Mr. Klotz in

Parliament.⁹ However immoderate this demand may seem, we want something better than that.

Have the Jews so much to be proud of in this political emancipation? The history of the Algerian Jews will give us the answer. One bright morning, without knowing the why or the wherefore, they woke up French citizens, and for twenty years they have exercised their rights to the advantage of those who jockey their ballots—their ignorance and their wretchedness making possible this traffic. What have they gained from this title of citizenship? Here are citizens daily driven from the workshops and the factories, and it is no longer the mere right to vote which is disputed, it is the right to live. Today no Jew in the world knows the atrocious anguish, the wretchedness and the despair of these citizens for whom there no longer exist laws or rights. How much happier would they be had they demanded for themselves the rights of men which were their due, and if people had then bestirred themselves to educate them intellectually and morally.

Such must be our task everywhere where the Jews are in servitude. We must solely demand for them individual rights, the right to develop in their own

⁹ Paul Singer, chief of the German Socialist party, had been a member of the Reichstag since 1884. Louis Lucien Klotz, a French lawyer and journalist, had been a member of the Chamber of Deputies since 1894, and later became a member of the Senate. In 1928 he was obliged to resign because of illegal financial activities.

fashion; we must exact for them in the countries unwilling to admit them to naturalization the freedom enjoyed by all foreigners, including that of merging in the non-Jewish mass, if they wish to do so. Once the Jew has been freed, his education will take place. Once he has been shown that the winning of civil rights and assimilation are not for him the end of his wretchedness, but, on the contrary, the source of new evils, of new persecutions, all the more bitter, all the more painful because his heightened sensibility will make him feel them more keenly, he will learn that as long as the Christian peoples are not prepared to treat him as an equal, and they never will be, all emancipation will be in vain; it will, of course, be legal, but never effective, because the prejudice will remain. Once the Jews have understood this, and we have only to open their eyes to the world to have them understand it, then they will feel deeply that they can never find true freedom except in autonomy. Rather than aspire to a fusion that is refused them, they will seek to constitute themselves into a group able to evolve without the least restraint, they will tell themselves that among their rights is numbered the right to be a people, and when that happens they will have the strength to give effect to that right. Since they will make up a considerable body, they will be able to say to the nations: "What do you want to do with us? We are sick and tired of being the business man who clothes

and feeds you, the historian who chronicles your annals, the poet who sings your legends, the scientist who enriches you; we want to think, dance, labor for ourselves, and we shall give you even handsomer flowers, because they have grown in freedom."

This, then, is our task: to bring closer that hour, the hour when the poor man of Israel shall at last find rest and, like the poor man of the ancient Psalms, shall see grow his vine and his fig tree. We have labored enough upon the fields of others; let us now till our own.

JUDAISM'S SOCIAL CONCEPT AND THE JEWISH PEOPLE¹

FOR TWO THOUSAND YEARS the Jews have been scattered among the nations and have shared their life; for centuries they have been in constant contact with the Christian peoples, and yet their customs, their spirit, the teachings of their sacred books, even the teachings of their philosophers, are less known than the habits of the Dahomans or the Lapps. In appraising the part they play, their activities, and their mentalities, men constantly make use of the same baggage of ancient prejudice and of a given number of formulas which possess no other merit than an undeniable antiquity. In the eyes of the world the Jews were in the past a group of usurers, trained by

¹ This article, first published in *La Grande Revue*, September 1, 1899, was a reply to an accumulation of anti-Jewish utterances and articles on the part of contemporary socialist writers. Karl Marx's *Zur Judenfrage* (1844) had been reprinted by *L'Humanité Nouvelle*—not surprising, since the editor of this newspaper was a friend and admirer of Edouard Drumont. What was more surprising, and prompted Bernard Lazare's reply, was that Jean Jaurès, one of the leaders of the Socialist party and chief of the *Dreyfusard* section within it, adopted Marx's theses wholeheartedly at a moment when the whole country was still seething with violent anti-Semitic propaganda.

Bernard Lazare's reply is given here in an abbreviated version; a certain number of historical "proofs" have been omitted, but the argument itself is preserved in its entirety.

the Talmud in the most subtle impostures, brought up in the art of garnering the maximum amount of gold. Today they are acknowledged outright to have wonderful ability as swallowers of capital and as traders, but people go further, and if they grant these gifts to the Jews, it is by virtue of an alleged social concept which is supposedly characteristic of them. Nor should the reader suppose that here is solely an anti-Semitic view; it would not then deserve the trouble of being opposed, or even discussed; it is likewise the view of men who would vehemently protest were you to attribute to them the least hint of prepossession, it is the view of intellectuals enlightened in all things save this, it is even the view of some socialists, notably Jaurès, and that is why it must be answered.

For those whom I have just mentioned, the social concept of the Jews is an essentially mercantile concept; in this matter they think as do the anti-Jews, but they confine themselves to expressing their thought in a different fashion; they present it with a scientific apparatus and a kind of economic dogmatism, yet basically they end up with the same result. They regard capitalism as a Jewish creation, and just as does Drumont after Gougenot de Mounaux,² so does Jaurès after Marx speak of the Judaization of the Christian peoples.

² Edouard Drumont's *La France Juive* was influenced by *La Judaïsation des peuples chrétiens* (1867) by Gougenot de

"It is the Jewish idea," says an anti-Semite, the Marquis de la Tour du Pin, "which leads a rich man to exploit the poor through capitalism, the modern form of usury." And Jaurès writes: "The social concept of the Jew, based on the idea of trade, is in perfect harmony with the mechanism of capital." Anti-Semitism and socialism hence seem to be in agreement on this point—at least Jaurès' socialism, since after this assertion he added that Drumont might, *without exaggeration*, have said that "the Jews, accustomed by centuries of persecution to practice the virtue of solidarity and long practiced in the handling of liquid wealth, have exercised an inordinate and formidable influence in our society," and he ended with these words, very serious coming from him: "Such a socialism, tinted with anti-Semitism, would scarcely have raised any objections among *esprits libres*." A strange notion of socialism, a no less strange notion of the free mind, assuredly surprising in a man who is one of the leaders of the socialist movement in France.

How did Jaurès come to elaborate such teachings? By slavishly adopting one of Marx's opinions, an opinion which has long weighed down the discussion of the Jewish question, whether it be used as a weapon by the anti-Semite, or be accepted without

Mouneaux, a widely read anti-Semitic writer of the Second Empire.

discussion and without thought by socialists. What was this opinion of Marx's? How was he led to give it utterance?

In 1843, during the days when the emancipation of the Jews was being discussed in Germany, Bruno Bauer brought out a resounding brochure, *Die Judenfrage*.³ Therein he expressed the idea that the Jew, if he is to be emancipated, must first of all free himself of Judaism, then free himself of Christianity, a higher expression of religion, but still an offshoot of the Jewish faith. In a word, the emancipation of the Jews is a theological matter. Marx answered in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*.⁴ For him the question was above all social, and we must study, not the "Sabbath Jew," as Bruno Bauer had done, but the "everyday Jew." In consequence, the "question of the capacity of the Jews for emancipation" turns into this other question: "What specific social element must be overcome in order to wipe out Judaism?" Marx asks, "What is the secular basis of Judaism? It is practical need, egoism. What is the Jew's secular religion? Trafficking. What is the Jew's secular god? Money. And so emancipation from trafficking and money, that is to say, from prac-

³ Bruno Bauer, a German theologian and historian of the Hegelian school, published two pamphlets, the one mentioned by Lazare, and a second called *Die Fähigkeit der heutigen Juden und Christen frei zu werden* (Zurich 1843).

⁴ A magazine edited by Karl Marx and Arnold Ruge, published in Paris, 1844.

tical and real Judaism, would be the self-emancipation so necessary to our day. An organization of society which would cause the disappearance of the conditions of trafficking, and consequently of trafficking itself, would make the Jew impossible; his religious consciousness as a Jew would evaporate and blow away like some wisp of haze in the true vital atmosphere of society. On the other hand, if the Jew recognizes as worthless his practical Jewish essence (egoism, trade, money) and labors for its destruction, then, from the basis of his past development, he works for human emancipation in general, and turns against the extreme practical expression of self-alienation. Hence we recognize in Judaism a universally prevalent antisocial element, which has been carried to its present height by the current of history, with eager Jewish co-operation, a height at which it will necessarily dissolve and disappear. *Jewish emancipation in its ultimate meaning is the emancipation of mankind from Judaism."*

In Marx's eyes, the Jew had emancipated himself by Judaizing the Christians, whereas to be truly emancipated he should have de-Judaized himself—to put it more accurately, he should have disappeared, taking with him his concept of trade.

If ever the Marx of *Das Kapital* reread this hasty and improvised polemic, no one must have passed a severer sentence than himself upon his own logomachy, his own categorical affirmations, his own per-

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empty assertions, which no proof, no fact supported. The logician he was assuredly must have smiled at the empty religio-economic metaphysics which he naïvely displayed in his article in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*. At the time he wrote it, he knew nothing about the Jews; his father had been converted to Protestantism, and he had left his son wholly in ignorance of the religion, the history, and the present position of those to whom he was linked by so many spiritual bonds. Later on he must have got to know them better; in any case he expressed no further opinion on the Jews, while that which he had earlier elaborated, as I have shown, still has currency. The anarchists of the Dühring⁵ variety picked it up in Germany. Anti-Semites like Drumont make use of it, and the socialists on occasion do not hesitate to assert, as once the master did, that the social concept of the Jews is based on trade.

How can such theories be justified? By producing written documents from Jewish sources which work out an apologetics for mercantilism, by showing within Israel a continuous tradition suited to the development of the idea and practice of trade and,

⁵ Eugen Dühring's philosophy was in many points akin to Comte's positivism and Feuerbach's materialism. His violent denunciation of the Jews, *Die Judenfrage als Rassen-, Sitten- und Kulturfrage. Mit einer weltgeschichtlichen Antwort* (1881), was therefore considered as anti-Semitism of the Left.

finally, by establishing by facts that the constant concern of Judaism has been commerce.

Let us limit ourselves for the moment to the written sources. Where might we turn to seek the social concept of the Jews? In the Bible, in the Talmud, and finally among the philosophers and the economists sprung from this nation. So let us examine what is the political economy of the biblical writers—chroniclers, moralists, and prophets; what is that of the Talmudists and the teachers of the Middle Ages; that of the philosophers and the theoreticians. Then let us see whether there is any trace of their teachings among non-Jews.

“For our part,” wrote Flavius Josephus, “we do not live in a coastal region, we have little liking for commerce. Our cities are at a distance from the sea, and our occupations consist in tilling the fine land which we inhabit.”

All the prophets of the Bible are agrarian. If it urges the having of many children, that is because every scrap of soil had to be worked, and Hillel was in the same tradition when he said that numerous servants are a scourge.

To sit in peace under one’s vine and one’s fig tree—that was the ideal; thus did the golden age come to pass, under the good kings.

The Bible ignores and scorns commerce. In the days of the patriarchs, it was carried on by the Ishmaelites, whose caravans passed through the coun-

try. During the time of the kings, the Phoenicians practiced it. The usual words and terms applicable to trade did not exist in biblical Hebrew. It was only after the Exile and during the talmudic period that these words came into the language.

And not only was the Bible's social concept an agricultural one, but it was a concept of small holdings, and the law had been framed with an eye to prevent the establishment of large properties. In ancient Israel a field could not be alienated, except in case of *force majeure*. It would be leased for a certain number of years, and then, in the year of Jubilee, the field returned to its original owner. Moreover, between the day of its "sale" and the year of Jubilee, a very broad right of redemption existed (Lev. 25:23-34).

It was only when the year of Jubilee was abolished that rich families were able to extend their possessions and large estates grew up. It was also from that time on that we see violent claims coming up which, in the first century before and after Christ, ended in a genuine social revolution. Up to that time the representatives of popular aspirations had been none other than the prophets and the voices of the poets of the Psalms, truly a literature of the poor.

Hence it is not in the Bible that we shall find this Jewish social concept based upon trade; quite the contrary, the concept therein is sharply anti-mercantile. This Catholicism adopted, has continuously

recommended, and has in a certain measure applied; and later this essentially Jewish concept was turned against the Jews, a fraction of whom had become traders.

Since the ideas and the social ideal which the talmudic teachers developed consisted of nothing more than one long commentary on the Bible, it could only present agriculture as pre-eminent above all things. Rabbi Eleazar said: "All men will one day abandon their professions to devote themselves to agriculture" (Midrash Rabbah on Leviticus). Yet this judgment already shows that agriculture was, during the talmudic age, merely the most desirable of states. From being a people exclusively pastoral and agricultural, the Jews had become above all a people of artisans, and the social concept of the Talmudist is that of a nation of workmen and scholars. "He who does not give his son a trade teaches him brigandage," said Rabbi Judah the Saint. "He who earns his livelihood through labor is greater than he who fears God," said another teacher. You will find this glorification of manual work, and of work of any kind whatever, on every page of the Talmud. Moreover, all the great teachers were artisans. This rule of the Talmudists was followed by Saint Paul, the commentator of the new law, when he said, "Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me" (Acts 20:34). Later Spinoza was to conform to the

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same standard; he would meditate upon the eternal substance, but he would not earn his living by his metaphysic. He refused the gifts of the great who sought to recompense him for his learning, and he lived by his skill as a polisher of lenses.

This concept is very far from being mercantile; the exaltation of the artisan, having given birth to laws protecting labor, implied contempt for those endowed with riches, for those possessed of gold, above all for those who lent gold at interest. Now in an agrarian society like that of the Jews, how could a rich man increase his fortune? By lending at interest, by usury. And no law has been harsher toward usury than the biblical law and the talmudic law sprung from it. In their eyes, money is a sterile thing. A loan, in the view of the Bible, should be free, but he to whom it had been made did not permanently remain a debtor: a special law at fixed intervals intervened to free him; every seven years came the sabbatical year, the year of the *shemithah*, and debts were canceled.

In the days of Hillel [*ca.* 110 B.C.E.-10 C.E.] it became necessary to evade this law, which the changed economy could not allow to remain in force. Hence there was introduced into the code what was called the *prosbul*.⁶ Before the sabbatical year, the credi-

⁶ A declaration made in court before the execution of a loan to the effect that the law of limitation by the entrance of the sabbatical year shall not apply to the loan to be transacted.

tor would lay his claim before a tribunal, a written report of his statement was prepared, witnesses attested it, and the sabbatical release was abrogated. But this law guaranteed only the payment of the loan without interest. As far as usury was concerned, the Talmudists were harsher than had been the book they commented. They likened usurers to shedders of blood, whom they deprived of the right to be witnesses (Baba Metzia, 61b; Sanhedrin, 24b). A talmudic legend well portrays the feelings which moved the moneylender. It relates that those whom the prophet Ezekiel brought back to life had all deserved death for having worshiped the idol of Nebuchadnezzar. Yet the divine pity resuscitated them all save one, and he had lent at interest.

The Roman courts which adjudicated matters of usury must indeed have been objects of horror to the Jews, since all talmudic legislation was designed to favor the poor man, the tiller of the soil, and the worker. Roman law was made for the rich man; it was essentially a traders' law, and a goodly portion of Rome's internal and social history was made up of rebellions by the plebs against the wealthy and noble lenders of money. One may even say that the world, inasmuch as it became capitalist, was Romanized and not Judaized. The Jew himself was Romanized: before the period of the Diaspora he knew nothing of commerce; the Phoenicians dared not teach him anything of it so long as he dwelt on his

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own soil; it was the Romans who saw to his education.

The Tosafists⁷ and the teachers of the Middle Ages were of like mind with the Talmudists. Rashi [1040-1105], the great doctor of Champagne, condemned usury, as did Maimonides [1135-1204]. Caro [1488-1575], the theologian, said: "We must be heedful, for the debtor, the creditor, the respondent (guarantor), the witnesses are transgressors of the law. . . . He who lends at interest shall be poor; it is as though he denied the flight out of Egypt and the God of Israel." He added: "We must beat and belabor the usurer until he gives up his soul" (Yoreh Deah §159, 1-5).

When the needs of the time and the changes which brought them in their wake made the Jewish bourgeoisie into a financial bourgeoisie, there were always men like Rabbi Moses of Coucy [thirteenth century] or Joselmann of Rosheim [*ca.* 1480-1554] to condemn excessive interest rates. True enough, theologians were also found to put this bourgeoisie at ease with its conscience. Certain Tosafists, and even Caro himself, allowed the taking of interest whenever life was in peril, and those who were dubbed the "pilpulists" (hairsplitters), exquisite casuists, were bent on twisting the law; they abolished the hated name of usury, they called this act a

⁷ Franco-German commentators on the Talmud of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

sharing in the profits supposed to result from the loan. In order to set the rate, you arbitrarily estimated the ultimate profit and then split it, so that one half of that profit gave you the rate you wanted to establish. By means of etymological interpretation of the prohibitory texts themselves, both those in the Bible and those in the Talmud, they even succeeded in justifying this procedure and this participation (*heter iska*). But this concern on their part demonstrates how strong was the authority of the prohibition, and what prejudices the Jew had to overcome when he turned into a moneylender.

Hence it is not in the Talmud or among Jewish teachers and theologians that we finally discover this Jewish social concept based on trade. Quite the opposite; and the Christian Church was heir to this Jewish anti-mercantilism. The Church's theory against usury was that of the Talmud; surely she never acquired it from the Greeks or from the Romans, trading peoples, but from Israel, an agricultural people among whom such theories were naturally bound to develop. In our time the anti-Semites represent, theoretically, the antitrade and antiusury concept of the Bible and the Talmud. According to their social concept, according to the idea they have of society, the anti-Semites can, without any paradox, be viewed as intransigent Jews, and in this the anti-Semites are merely the left wing of the Catholic economists, of

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the Perins and the Le Plays, and of the Christian socialists.⁸

Having encountered no doctrine based on trade either in the Bible or in the Talmud, shall we find it to any greater degree among the philosophers and the economists sprung from Israel? Neither Ibn Gabirol [1021-1058] nor Spinoza will reveal it to us, since the Platonism of the one and the pantheism of the other leave no room for an apology in favor of commerce. Nor does Ricardo—far less Marx and Lassalle—frame such an apology; quite the contrary. Would you say that Colbertism and mercantilism—in so far as they are economic theories—are Jewish social concepts? Thomas Mun, Colbert, or François Malon were not Jews, any more than Adam Smith, despite his industrial system, any more than Bentham, who wrote the *Defence of Usury*, any more than Turgot, who demanded full freedom for interest paid on capital.⁹

⁸ Henri Charles Xavier Perin and Pierre Guillaume Frédéric Le Play approached sociological questions from the physical sciences and industry and became the main originators of the antimaterialist, antipositivist school of sociology in France. These theories, with their emphasis on the productive aspects of industrial capitalism as opposed to banking capital, were later used by the Christian variety of anti-Semitism that during the last decades of the nineteenth century was especially strong in Catholic Austria and France.

⁹ An enumeration of the main representatives of both the mercantile doctrine and the free-trade system. Jean Baptiste Colbert, French statesman of the seventeenth century and adviser to Louis XIV, is usually counted among the outstanding representatives of mercantilism. Thomas Mun, English writer on

Where shall we then find any trace of this "Jewish social system based on trafficking"? Let us listen to Marx: It is not, says he, "in the Pentateuch or in the Talmud but in contemporary society that we find the essence of the contemporary Jew; we find it there not as an *abstract* essence, but as an essence as *empiric* as it can be." This amounts to saying that the Jew puts into practical effect, in the society within which he lives, a concept based on trade, and that he has always done so. Stripped of all logomachy, this means that the Jew, since his entrance into the Christian world, has been suited only to trade, and here is assuredly what we find at the root of all the argumentations, of all theories against the Jews, or of the theories which presume to explain the Jew socially. What remains to be explained is how it has been possible for such a mistake to gain currency, how it can have been accepted by informed and open minds.

Let us assume an historian who, in studying a people, in finding out that which is characteristic of it, its philosophy and its ideal, limits himself to considering only one of the classes composing that

economics during the first half of the seventeenth century, gave the first clear statement of the theory of the balance of trade. The English philosopher and jurist, Jeremy Bentham, the English economist, Adam Smith, and the Frenchman Anne Robert Jacques Turgot, a statesman and economist of the eighteenth century, are mentioned here because of their opposition to mercantilism.

people. If he examines only the proletariat, he will perhaps conclude that this people has a social concept based upon anti-mercantilism and upon labor. If, on the contrary, he concentrates solely on the financial, industrial, and commercial bourgeoisie, he will with equal justice assert that this people's social concept is based on trade. No nation on earth could escape the consequences of such a fashion of writing history.

This is what has happened to the Jews, and not only have they been considered in their role as traders by the anti-Semites, but also by the Jews themselves, when they have undertaken to write their own history. It is the Jewish bourgeoisie which became traders and money-handlers, and not "the Jews." The Jewish historians, however, turned their backs on the people and refused to look at it. Their history being also an apologetical history of the Jews in relation to the Christians, a history composed with an eye to show the progressive efforts of the Jews toward assimilation—not a proper purpose—they had one constant preoccupation: not to write the history of the Jews considered as a nation.¹⁰

¹⁰ Bernard Lazare had in mind Heinrich Graetz's *History of the Jews* (1852-1875). He accused Graetz of regarding the Jews as a people of traders and manipulators of money, and therefore of agreeing on certain points with the anti-Semites, the only difference being that Graetz pleads extenuating circumstances. Lazare was unacquainted with Simon Dubnow's *General History of the Jewish People*, which first appeared in Russian in 1901.

As a matter of fact, this history is not understandable in any other terms. The Jews have never ceased to be a people. If there are among them various types, that is, if, as they exist today, they are not descended from a single human couple, it is nonetheless true that these ethnographic types, different one from another, belong only to the Jews. They have a like mentality. I speak generally, for were I studying the English mentality, I should not take as specimens for my examination the sons of naturalized Englishmen living in France. In like manner, when I speak of the Jews, I refer to the mass of Galician, Rumanian, Russian, and Oriental Jews, and not to the occasional Christianized and Hellenized Jews of the West—although the better sort among the latter have preserved, nevertheless, their Jewish characteristics. In this mass a special intellectuality derives from a like education, a like way of life, material, religious, and moral. From the three-fold ethnological, ethical, and intellectual point of view, the Jews are undeniably a people, among whom single individuals, as among all peoples, are perfectly able to acquire another nationality. If we look upon the Jews from the economic point of view, we find them divided into classes, like any other nation, and it has been always thus. There has always existed among them a financial upper class—whose role, however, has been overstressed—and an intellectual or trading middle class. It has not been ade-

quately noted that the economic history of the Jews is not the history of the struggles between Christian and Jewish manipulators of money, but of struggles between petty bourgeois traders, Christian and Jewish. And finally there has always been among the Jews a vast proletariat.

All the Jewish communities were constituted as follows: a nucleus of rich men, a group of traders engaged in small business, a great number of artisans, and finally a whole *gens* of poor people around the synagogue subsisting on the pious alms and assessments made by the managers of the community upon the incomes of those who could contribute to the support of the religious services and the upkeep of the indigent. In the charters and in the chartularies, these artisans and poor folk do not appear; they had no dealings with the cities and with the religious communities, either to obtain real estate or to win commercial privileges; nor do they appear on the lists of those who paid taxes; it was the community which paid for them, for its managers were those held responsible. It is when you compare the number of those who pay taxes with the total of the Jewish population that you discover the poor and the petty artisans. As for documentation, it is to be found in the writings of many travelers who visited Jewish communities, such as Benjamin of Tudela [twelfth century], Petachia of Ratisbon [twelfth century], etc., who everywhere found Jew-

ish workers. The Jewish chronicles moreover furnish sufficient precise information in the accounts of the popular disturbances or the discussions which everywhere preceded expulsions of the Jews. Finally, the tombstones of Jewish cemeteries and the archives of the communities, or else documents emanating from them, supply us with valuable facts and hints. From their study may be gained not only the history of the classes among the Jews, but it can even be seen that the class struggle has always been lively inside the communities.

You will also discover that no people has ever had so great a number of poor as the Jewish people. In the first place, since war was held in horror by Israel, the desirable state was that of being poor or of being a doctor of the law. The rich felt honored in having a numerous clientage of poor people and of more or less destitute scholars. Circumstances, however, greatly contributed to creating this vast class of the destitute. Farmers at home, on their own soil, traders after the dispersion, a part of the Jews became the intermediaries in the Christian nations between Europe and the East. After the great economic movement of the Crusades, the Catholic middle class took steps to protect its own trade and closed to the Jews—having besides massacred them—the road to the Orient, reducing them to internal traffic with the peasantry, and thus relegated them in large part to the petty bourgeoisie. At the same time, the guilds

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were taking shape on a religious and Christian basis and drove out the Jewish artisan, forcing him into the lesser trades; they made it necessary that he should work almost entirely for his Jewish brethren and thus helped to create in every Jewish community a considerable category of unemployed.

The Jews' economic situation has not changed in our own days. As it was yesterday, as it has always been, class division continues among them: essentially city-dwellers, their middle class is almost wholly commercial or industrial, except for a tiny fraction which is made up partly of intellectuals, partly of the financial upper bourgeoisie. As for the vast majority, it still constitutes a proletariat concentrated in Russian territory, in Galicia, Rumania, and Bulgaria and in important London and New York agglomerations. In these latter centers, official inquiries into the sweatshop system have shown that small Jewish bosses heavily oppress the proletariat of their own race. The same is true in the great industrial cities of Russia, at Lodz and Berdichev, for example, in certain districts of Galicia, where periodic strikes bring Jewish bosses and Jewish workers face to face in open strife. But alongside this proletariat, which in Holland, England, and America has been able to organize, there vegetates a whole people of unemployed, a *Lumpenproletariat*, such as exists in no other nation, a crowd of paupers, crawling about the steppes of Russia, in Poland, Algeria, the Orient.

Of all the proletarians, the Jewish proletarian is the most wretched, having against him not only his own rich men but also the rich and poor of the peoples in whose midst he dwells.

Thus the study of the teachings of their books—Bible or Talmud—has not shown us among the Jews a social concept based upon trade; study of what Marx called the “*empiric essence*” of the Jew has not shown it either. One must look elsewhere than to the Jews to attribute the development of the system, be it mercantile, industrialist, or capitalist; and it is owing to an inadequate study of the past and present economic position of the Jews that any man could speak as once Jaurès spoke, following Marx, and that any man can think, together with the vast majority of Jewish writers, that this people’s enemy is commercial gain and that its masterwork is capitalism—when it is subjected to capitalism and suffers from it in a sharper way, proportionately, than all other peoples.

Never has the Jew been studied except in his bourgeoisie; it is time to study him in his proletariat, a mass truly strong and characteristic of the nation.

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